DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 026 425 UD 007 697

By-Brocki, A.C., Ed.

Teaching Voices of Youth and Three Novelettes: An Instructional Bulletin for B7 English.

Los Angeles City Schools, Calif. Div. of Secondary Education.

Report No-LACS-ESEA-T-E-129-67

Pub Date 7 Jul 67

Note-494p.

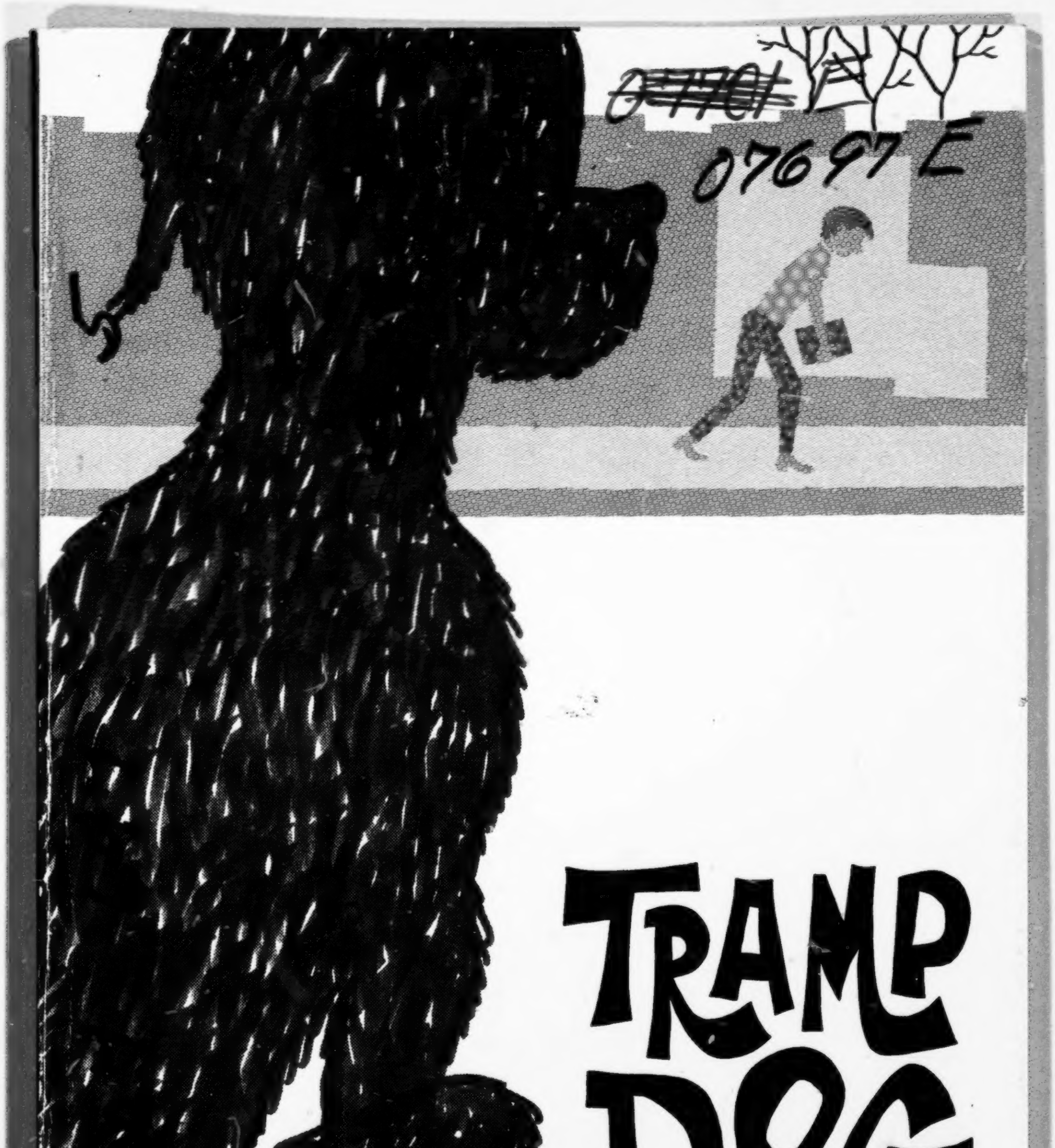
EDRS Price MF-$2.00 HC-$24.80

Descriptors-*Curriculum Guides, Discussion (Teaching Technique), *Instructional Materials, *Junior High Schools, Lesson Plans, Literature, Novels, Reading, *Reading Materials, Student Interests, Textbooks, *Urban Schools

Identifiers-Danger Above and Below, Jacqueline Ludlum, Jane Sprague, Robert J Franklin, Runaway Jerk, Tramp Dog

The document consists of three parts--an instructional bulletin for teachers of urban junior high school students with average and below average reading ability, a book of readings, and three novelettes prepared for these students. The bulletin offers guidelines on the ways to use the readings and suggestions for teaching literature to urban pupils as well as for stimulating effective discussion. Also presented are outlines of lesson plans, both general and specific. The paperbound, pocket sized book of readings contains both fiction and non-fiction selections written especially for city pupils. (NH)

~~07701~~ E
07697 E



TRAMP DOG

by

ROBERT J. FRANKLIN

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT
LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS

ED026425

UD 007 697-5

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

TRAMP DOG

by ROBERT J. FRANKLIN

B7 English

LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS
Division of Secondary Education
Specially-Funded Programs
Publication No. ESEA 4-10
1967

This publication was developed with funds provided by the federal government under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

APPROVED:

EVERETT CHAFFEE
Associate Superintendent
Division of Instructional Planning and Services

ROBERT E. KELLY
Associate Superintendent
Division of Secondary Education

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many of the persons who took part in developing reading selections for B7 English have been recognized and thanked in the introductory pages of *Voices of Youth*, the anthology for B7 English. Special appreciation is expressed here to Eileen McDowell, of Berendo Junior High School, who took time to read, evaluate, teach and have her pupils evaluate *Tramp Dog* in a trial edition. Al Kaelin, Consultant, Pilot Projects, designed the cover.

HARRIETTE F. WILLIAMS
Pilot Projects Coordinator
Specially-Funded Programs

THOMAS O. LAWSON
Administrative Coordinator
Specially-Funded Programs

TRAMP DOG

CHAPTER 1

Benny Martinez was very lonely because he had no friends. He had no friends because he was shy. He was shy because he thought he was ugly. When he looked in the mirror he saw very high cheek bones, a humped nose, slitted eyes, and straight black hair. His skin was rough. His teeth were yellow and crooked. His ears stuck out like airplane wings.

Benny was fifteen years old and in the tenth grade. He made the boys nervous when he came around them, and the girls were quick to do other things when he came near. Nobody at school talked much with Benny–except his teachers. Sometimes Benny felt so lonely for someone to talk with that a great sob would start to rise from deep inside him and reach all the way to his lips, but he would close his lips tight not to let it out; so the sob would continue up to his eyes and make them watery. He did not understand why no one would be his friend.

Benny's English teacher, Mrs. Brown, was a nice lady. She was older than his mother, he thought. The English class was very small, only twenty, and the teacher was kind with him when she called him to her desk to help him in reading. She was also patient when he made mistakes on the ditto papers which asked questions about the stories. Sometimes Mrs. Brown asked Benny questions about his mother and father and his home. And one time, she asked him what he was going to be when he finished school. For that question, he had no answer. He did not think about such things.

Benny liked agriculture class the best. He liked to dig in the garden, work the fertilizer into the ground and make it smooth. He liked to make straight rows and poke little holes for the seeds which Mr. Stein, the teacher, gave him. He planted each seed with great care and covered it with a soft touch. He watered carefully so as not to uncover the seeds, and he had a feeling of great joy when the little yellow-green shoots sprouted through the dirt. Mr. Stein saw how Benny loved the plants and gave him three rows of ground for his very own. There he planted carrots, radishes, tomatoes, and Swiss chard.

Mr. Stein explained how the roots got food from the soil and how the leaves got energy from the sun. Benny did not like it when they had to read from books and magazines with hard words to tell how to take care of plants. He mostly liked to feel the soil and watch the seeds grow. However, these things did not fill the empty feeling inside Benny. He wanted a friend, and he did not know how to make friends.

CHAPTER 2

Then one day, when Benny was walking home after school, a friend appeared. It was like magic. In a way, the friend looked very much like Benny—big nose, long ears, and short bowed legs—the friend was the ugliest dog Benny had ever seen in his life. It looked like part of everything in the dog world.

At first Benny said, "Shoo! Go home!" The dog stopped, cocked its head sideways and cringed a little. Its overlong tail drooped between its legs. When Benny continued walking, the dog continued following. Three times, Benny shooed the dog away, but each time he said it softer. Then, he pretended to pay no attention to it. A block from his house, Benny turned to the dog for the fourth time. "What's the matter with you?" he said. "Ain't you got no home?"

The dog cringed low and crawled to Benny's feet. Then it lay flat on its belly and rolled over on its side with its tail between its legs. It was a very dirty dog—all dirty white, with black ears, black feet, and a black tip on the tail. It was a boy dog. Its ribs stood out as though it was starving. Its big brown eyes looked very sad and lonely.

Benny leaned down and patted the dog's head. When he did this, the dog licked his hand. The dog had no collar. It belonged to no one. "Golly!" Benny said. "You sure are ugly. How come you follow me? Ain't you got no friends?"

The tail came out from between the legs and wagged with such great speed that it raised dust in the unpaved street. Benny laughed. "By golly, you are ugly," he said again. He continued on his way home, and the dog followed. Now Benny did not shoo it away. When he got to the wooden picket fence that separated his front yard from the dirt-path sidewalk, he left the little gate open and went around to the kitchen door without looking back.

Benny said hello to his mother, who was peeling potatoes at the sink. His mother smiled at him and nodded and kept on peeling. She had Indian features, was a quiet woman, and spoke very little. Benny went on through the kitchen to the front room and peeked through the worn curtain of the big window. He saw the dog, still in the gateway with one paw raised, afraid to step across the invisible line that shut it out from a home. It just stood with the paw raised and the head turned sideways, wondering if it should cross the line.

Benny went back to the kitchen. "Mama," he said, "you think I can have a dog?"

Mrs. Martinez answered in Spanish. "Why you want a dog?"

"I do not know," Benny said. "A little dog followed me home from the school. Many times I told him, 'Go away,' but he followed me anyway. He is at the front gate now."

Mrs. Martinez went to the front window and looked out. The dog still stood with its paw raised. "It is not a good dog," she said.

"No," Benny repeated, "it is not a good dog. But it followed me."

"It does not look good," his mother said.

"I think he likes me," Benny answered. "I have no friend who likes me. I have never had a dog. I would like this one."

"Your father will decide," she said, and she returned to the kitchen.

Papa will not like the dog, Benny thought. Maybe, if I give him a bath, he will look better. Benny stepped to the wooden porch and said, "Come here, boy."

The dog jumped through the gateway and wiggled and squirmed at Benny's feet. It followed him to the backyard where Benny gave it a bath in his mother's big wash tub. The dog looked very miserable, and seemed skinnier than ever, dripping wet. Benny wiped him dry, and, as Benny rubbed him with an old sweater, the dog licked Benny's face.

Benny laughed, "Hey, you crazy dog. 'Cause I give you a bath, you try to give me one." The dog tried to lick Benny's face again. The ribs sticking out made the boy sad. He went into the kitchen and asked his mother for food for the dog. She gave him a piece of bread. The dog gobbled the bread in two gulps. Then Benny gave him fresh water to drink, and he drank with great thirst.

"Now I must give you a name," Benny said aloud. "You are very ugly, but you have pretty eyes that look sad. I will call you *Ojos Tristes*. That is Spanish for Sad Eyes."

When Benny's father came home, tired and covered with cement dust from his cement work, he did not want the dog. "Dogs cost too much money," he said gently.

"I will give it food from my plate," Benny said.

"It is not the food only," his father explained. "There must be the license to buy. There is also the rabies shot. It's gonna cost maybe five or six dollars."

Benny's eyes were sad, like the dog's.

"It is just a tramp dog," his father continued. "In a day or two, he will run away."

Benny never argued with his father. He did not know what to say. He did not know how to explain the empty, lonely feeling inside him.

Mr. Martinez went into the bathroom to wash off the cement dirt that stuck to his hands and face. Benny fed the dog more bread and was paid with a wet kiss. He thought and thought about Ojos Tristes.

At supper table, after his father finished eating, Benny asked, "Is it hard to earn money for the dog?"

"I don't know," his father said. "You can't do nothing. Jobs are hard to find for young boys."

Benny said, “If I do not try to make the dog stay, can it stay if it wants? I am fifteen. I will try to earn the money for the shot and the license.”

Mr. Martinez looked at his son. He saw the great desire for the dog in the boy’s eyes. “It’s okay with me,” he said, “but you gotta earn the money for him.”

“Thank you, Papa!” Benny said with joy. He ran out to the back porch where Ojos Tristes waited for him. He hugged the dog around the neck and whispered into its big floppy ear, “Papa says you can stay if I earn the money.” Then Benny was quiet and thoughtful. How does one earn money? He felt a worry. If he did not earn the money, he could not keep the dog.

CHAPTER 3

Benny worried all the next day during his classes. He kept asking himself, how does one earn money? In Benny's last class, agriculture, Mr. Stein knew something was wrong when he saw Benny making a crooked row in the garden.

"What is the matter?" Mr. Stein asked.

Benny told him about Ojos Tristes and his need for money. Mr. Stein thought a moment and then said, "You work very well in the garden. Maybe you can do gardening work after school."

Benny's eyes lit up. "Do you think so?" he asked hopefully.

"Well," said Mr. Stein, "the thing to do is go to the school employment office in the main building. Tell the teacher in charge that you want to work part-time after school and weekends doing gardening."

Benny had never been to the employment office. He did not know there was such a place. He went to the main building as soon as he put away his rake and hoe after the bell rang. He was nervous and afraid, but the need for the money for his dog made him brave.

Inside the office, Benny explained his need to a man sitting behind a desk. The man gave him a piece of paper with blank places to fill in. Some of the things he could write–his name and address, his father's name and the work he did, and his mother's name. The other words puzzled him. "What is this?"

Benny asked the man behind the desk, and he pointed to a word.

"*Experience,*" the man said. "What kind of work can you do? Who have you worked for? Down here where it says *References,* write the names of people where you worked or people who know you."

"All these things are necessary?" Benny asked with a worried voice.

"Yes," the man said. "Suppose you take this application home and fill it out. Bring it back to me tomorrow."

"Can't I get the job now?" Benny asked.

"Not until you fill out the application and have your parents sign it. Then I will go over it and see what work there is."

Benny shook his head. It had seemed so simple when Mr. Stein talked to him. When Benny left the school grounds, Ojos Tristes was waiting for him by the main gate. The dog's whole body wiggled with excitement. Benny was happy that the dog waited for him, but he was worried about the paper that must be filled in, and he walked home sadly while Ojos Tristes ran between his legs and tried to trip him.

That night Benny showed the application to his father. Mr. Martinez shook his head over the words. "I do not read the English very good," he said, "but, here, where you say, I will put my name." With a shaky handwriting he wrote, Alfredo Martinez.

During English class the next day, Mrs. Brown saw that Benny was not reading his lesson and writing his words. She called him to her desk. Benny took the application with him. When Mrs. Brown saw that he was studying the application, she helped him fill in the spaces, but she made him do the writing. She showed him how to write *cement worker* after his father's name, and *housewife* after his mother's name. Then, where it said *References,* in one space she wrote her name, and after that she wrote: "Benny Martinez is an honest, hardworking boy. He comes to class on time and has not been absent. He is also very courteous and does not get into trouble."

Mrs. Brown read what she had written for Benny. He studied the words and said, "Thank you."

In agriculture class Benny showed the application to Mr. Stein. Mr. Stein also filled in a space under *References* with his name. He also wrote: "Benny is a good worker in agriculture. He likes planting and growing things, and he grows the best vegetables in his class. He will be a fine garden worker."

Again Benny said, "Thank you."

When Benny returned to the employment office with his application, the man read it and said, "So, you would like to do gardening?"

"Yes, sir," Benny said.

The man opened a drawer in a metal filing cabinet and looked through some folders. Then he shook his head and said, "I don't have anything right now."

Benny was puzzled. Did the man not know that he must have the work to keep his dog? He stood silently.

"People call all the time," the man said. "I will keep your application on file, and when there is work, I will let you know."

Benny was disappointed. The nice things his teachers wrote did not get him work. What was he to do about Ojos Tristes?

CHAPTER 4

During the next three days, the dog followed Benny to school and waited outside the fence until he came out. For three days, when Benny went to the employment office, the man shook his head and said, “Sorry, nothing yet.”

It was Friday. Two days must pass before he could again go to the employment office. As Benny crossed the street from the school, a panel truck with heavy wire over the windows pulled up alongside him. A man in a uniform got out of the truck. “Hey, Boy!” he called sharply to Benny.

Benny stopped. The man came to him. “Is this your dog?” he asked.

Benny felt a great fear inside. “It follows me,” he said honestly.

“I got complaints from people about this dog hanging around the school. I’ll have to take him to the pound.”

“It is a good dog,” Benny said. “It hurts no one.”

“Yeah,” said the man, “but he’s got no license. He may have rabies.” He slipped a short rope around Ojos Tristes’ neck. The dog whimpered. Benny did not know what to do. He feared for his dog.

“He is my dog,” Benny blurted out. “I made the paper to find the work to buy a shot for the rabies and for the license.” He grabbed the dog from the man and wrapped his long arms around the dog’s trembling body.

"Look, kid," the man said fiercely, "don't give me no trouble. I'm an officer and you're interfering with my work."

Benny remembered his father saying, "One must obey the law," and he released his hold on the dog. He did not know the words to say. Why should they want to take away his dog?

"Now you're being sensible," the man said. "If you want the dog, all you got to do is come to the City Pound after ten days. If no one claims it, it's yours."

"Is that all?" Benny asked with relief. "You are not going to kill him?"

"Not for ten days," the man said. "You come down and pay five dollars for the dog and four dollars for the license, and then you'll need two-fifty for the rabies shot."

Five and four and two-fifty, Benny figured slowly. Benny's heart sank. "That's eleven dollars, fifty cents!"

"That's about right," said the man as he opened the back of the truck and put Ojos Tristes inside. Then he got in the driver's seat and drove away. The dog stood with his face against the back window and whined for Benny. Benny stood in misery, watching the truck and his beloved Ojos Tristes disappear around a corner.

When Benny told his father what happened, his father only said, "It is for the best. The dog is a tramp. He is not worth eleven-fifty."

Never had Benny been angry with his father, but now he was angry. "My dog is not a tramp! All you think about is the money," he yelled. "You do not care they will kill him! You do not like me. Only the money!" He ran out the back door and down the dirt street as fast as his short legs could run. He kept running until his chest hurt with pain. He came to a park and fell to the damp grass under a big tree. Alone, he was not ashamed to cry, and he sobbed until he fell asleep.

It was very dark when he awoke. His father sat quietly beside him. Benny thought about what had happened, but he said nothing. His father spoke softly. "Your words give me much pain. I do not think of the money. It is of you and your mama I think first. I say nothing before, but now I tell you . . . there is the strike."

"What's that?" Benny asked.

"I gotta walk off the job."

"Why?"

"I don't know. The Union says. I much rather work. No work, no money. That is why I say no money for the dog."

Benny did not understand about strikes and the Union. He did know money was needed for the food and house. "I'm sorry I said bad things, Papa."

"Is okay, Boy," Mr. Martinez said. "C'mon. Is getting cold." They walked home.

The next morning, Saturday, Mr. Stein, the agriculture teacher, drove up to Benny's house. Mr.

Martinez had already gone to look for new work. Mr. Stein wanted Benny to help him work around his house.

Mr. Stein's house was in front of an acre of different kinds of trees. A large, green lawn was all around the house. Benny mowed the grass and edged neatly. Then he raked leaves from between the trees and pulled the weeds. He liked this work. Mr. Stein worked alongside him and nodded with approval. The time went fast. At noon, Mrs. Stein brought them sandwiches and milk. When two o'clock came, Mr. Stein drove Benny home.

"Can you help me again, tomorrow?" he asked Benny.

"Yes, sir," Benny said.

Mr. Stein held out a five-dollar bill to Benny. Benny put his hands behind him and backed away. "Go on, take it," Mr. Stein said. "You earned it."

"But I cannot take money from you," Benny stammered.

"Nonsense," Mr. Stein said. He folded the bill and put it into Benny's shirt pocket.

Later that afternoon, when Mr. Martinez came home, Benny proudly handed him the five-dollar bill. He told his father all about helping Mr. Stein.

Mr. Martinez said, "This is your money. Keep it to get back the dog."

Benny's heart leaped with joy. Then he remembered about the no work. Money would be needed for the food. "No, Papa," Benny said. "It is as you said, 'The dog is a tramp.' I will spend the money for him, and he will run away."

Benny did not believe what he said, but he did not want his father to worry about the money for the food. Mr. Martinez understood and patted Benny's shoulder, but he said nothing.

On Sunday, Benny again worked for Mr. Stein, and again he brought five dollars to his father.

It was now three days since the man took away Ojos Tristes. At night, alone in his bed, Benny pulled the covers over his head so no one would hear, and he cried for the dog.

CHAPTER 5

On Monday, the employment office man called Benny from Third Period. There was a gardening job not far from the school. After school, Benny mowed a lady's lawn, edged and raked, and dug around the bushes. While he worked, a neighbor lady came to visit his new employer. After watching Benny dig, the neighbor said, "My, oh my, Janice! How nice your yard looks." She asked Benny to work in her yard the next day. Benny said, "Yes, thank you."

He got three dollars for his work that day and three dollars the next day. Each day he gave the money to his father. Benny did not think it was right to take money for doing work he liked, but both ladies wanted him to come again each week, and his father would have need of the money. Benny had earned sixteen dollars but it could not be for the dog.

On Wednesday there was no work, and Benny walked three miles to the City Dog Pound. Twice he asked a policeman which way to go. He got there only five minutes before closing time. A lot of dogs were inside the wire kennels in back of the building. They barked and made much noise when he passed them.

At the far end of the row, Ojos Tristes lay on the cement floor. He was very quiet. When he looked up and saw Benny, his tail began to wag, and he jumped against the wire to kiss Benny's face.

A man in uniform came by and said, "Look at that, will you? That dog hasn't moved for three days. Barely eats."

"He is my friend," Benny said proudly.

The man looked at some papers on a clipboard. "Well, he's got to stay in quarantine until next Monday. Bring the money then, and you can take him. See if you can get him to eat, so he doesn't starve."

There is food in the dish, Benny thought. Why should Ojos Tristes *starve?* "Eat, you fool dog," Benny said. "You want to get sick so I can't take you home?" The dog wagged its tail and began to gulp his food.

A lump came to Benny's throat. He had forgotten. There would be no money to take the dog. It was time to close the pound. Sadly, Benny left. He tried to hold back the tears, but a few came out and ran down his cheeks. He thought he would not go back to see his friend again.

On Thursday there still was no work. Mr. Stein saw how sad Benny was and talked to him in the plant greenhouse. "Did you earn enough money to get your dog from the pound?" Mr. Stein asked.

"Yes, sir," Benny mumbled.

"Then, why so sad?" Mr. Stein asked.

Benny shrugged his shoulders. "There is the strike. I give the money to my father. I no longer care about the dog. Anyway, they will kill him Monday." He tried to say it as though he didn't care.

That night Benny's father was very happy. The strike was over. "Monday I go back to work," he said. "Then, in a week, I will get paid and we will get your dog."

"It is too late," Benny said. "The man said they will kill the dog Monday."

Benny's father said, "I am sorry. I used your money for food already."

"It's okay," Benny said. "He is just an old tramp dog." But, that night in bed, Benny thought, "Maybe I can earn enough money for Ojos Tristes if I look for work tomorrow, and on Saturday and Sunday, too."

Benny did not tell his father or mother, but he did not go to school the next morning. Instead, he walked up and down all the streets where there were houses with big lawns and gardens. At each house, he asked for work. Each time, the lady at the door shook her head. There was no work. The time was getting nearer and nearer for his dog to die. Benny was desperate to earn the money. Monday, the last day for Ojos Tristes, Benny skipped school again. All day long, he looked for work, without luck. Only his regular lady had work for him, and she paid him the three dollars. It was not enough. He went next door and asked his Tuesday lady if he could do her yard work that day, but she said, "I'm sorry, but I have no money for you this week. Can you make it a week from tomorrow?"

"Yes, thank you," Benny said. He was very disappointed. It was bad luck. With the six dollars, maybe he could get his dog. Three dollars was not enough. He asked at many more houses for work, but there was none. It was already dark when he started home. I'll save my money, he thought, and maybe next week I will have enough to go to the pound to buy another dog. That is what I will do. Deep in his heart, he did not want another dog–he wanted only Ojos Tristes, because Ojos Tristes was his friend.

There were no street lights where Benny lived. It was very dark. When Benny opened the gate of the little picket fence, he stumbled over something soft at his feet. He started to kick it away. It wiggled. Benny's heart pounded–how could it be? He gathered the thing in his arms, and it licked all over his face with its tongue–Ojos Tristes! I am dreaming, he thought. He ran into the house with the dog still in his arms. In the front room were his father and mother, and Mr. Stein.

Benny did not understand. He stood waiting for somebody to speak.

"I see you found each other," Mr. Stein said.

"I thought . . . I thought . . ." Benny could not say what he thought. He looked at his father. "Did you not need the money?"

"Your friends put up the money," Mr. Stein said.

"But, I have no friends . . . except you," Benny said, puzzled.

"You have many friends," Mr. Stein said. "Friday, when you didn't come to school, I told all the boys and girls in agriculture about your dog. They all pitched in to get him from the pound."

Benny still did not understand. "I thought they did not like me . . ."

Mr. Stein said, "It's that you are shy and stay by yourself all the time. They don't understand, so they leave you alone."

"I see," said Benny, but he did not see.

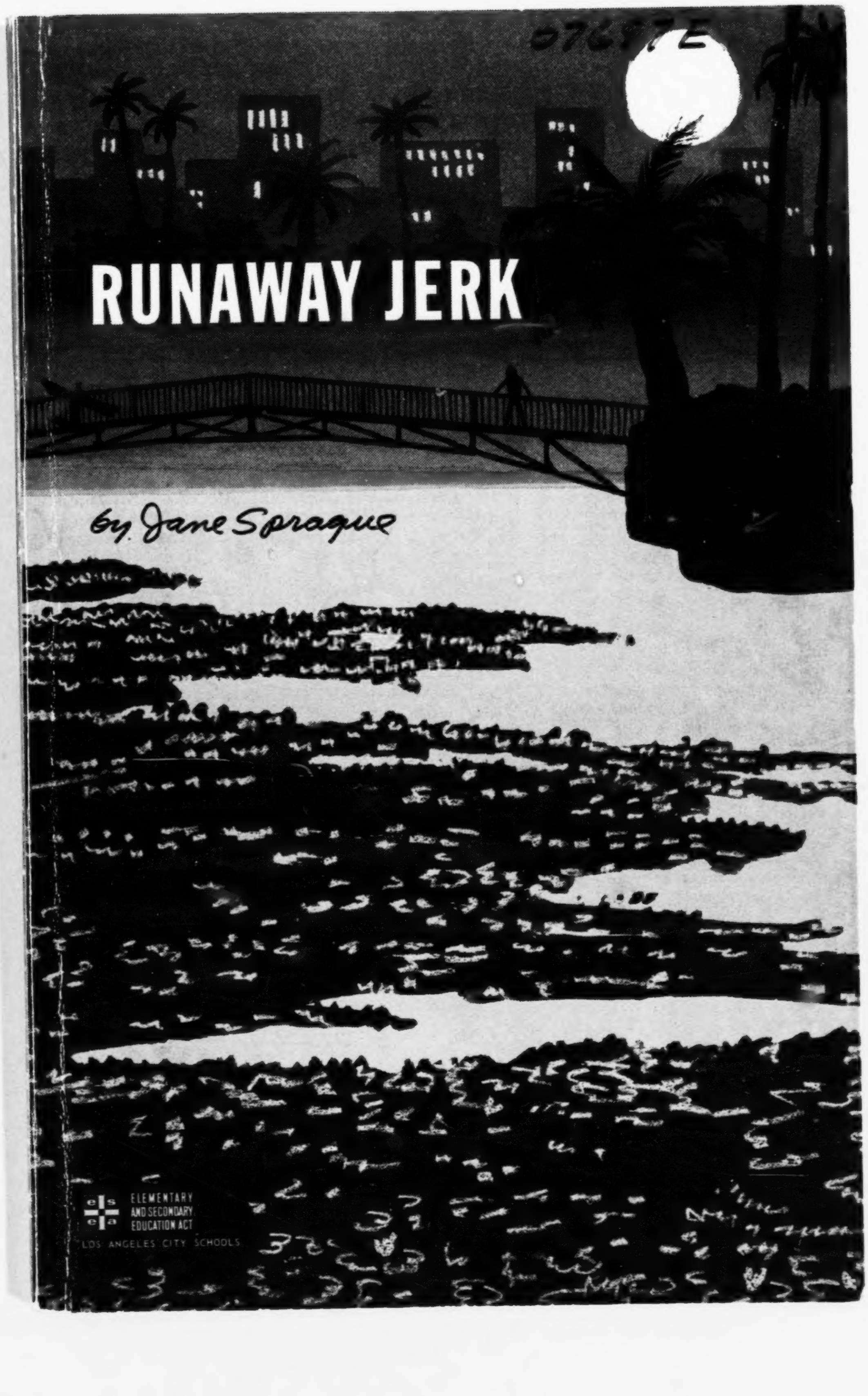
"When you come back to school, tomorrow," Mr. Stein said, "you tell them all about your dog. They will like that."

Benny smiled happily.

Mr. Martinez said, "This morning I borrowed some money for your dog. When I got to the pound, your teacher was making out the papers." Mr. Martinez began to laugh. So did Mr. Stein. "I did not know he was your teacher, and he did not know I was your father," Mr. Martinez continued. "I tell you, Benny, we almost had one big fight to see who got the dog."

Benny looked at his father and his teacher, and he laughed with happiness while tears of joy ran down his face. Ojos Tristes licked away the tears with his tongue.

07677E



RUNAWAY JERK

by Jane Sprague

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT
LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS

ED026425

UD 007 697 -4

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

RUNAWAY JERK

by JANE SPRAGUE

B7 English

LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS
Division of Secondary Education
Specially-Funded Programs
Publication No. ESEA 4-8
1967

This publication was developed with funds provided by the federal government under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

APPROVED:

EVERETT CHAFFEE
Associate Superintendent
Division of Instructional Planning and Services

ROBERT E. KELLY
Associate Superintendent
Division of Secondary Education

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many of the persons who took part in developing reading selections for B7 English have been recognized and thanked in the introductory pages of *Voices of Youth,* the anthology for B7 English. Special appreciation is expressed here to Eileen McDowell, of Berendo Junior High School, who took time to read, evaluate, teach and have her pupils evaluate *Runaway Jerk* in a trial edition. Al Kaelin, Consultant, Pilot Projects, designed the cover.

HARRIETTE F. WILLIAMS
Pilot Projects Coordinator
Specially-Funded Programs

THOMAS O. LAWSON
Administrative Coordinator
Specially-Funded Programs

RUNAWAY JERK

CHAPTER 1

Mike sat at his desk in homeroom. Another boy walked into the room, passed by Mike's desk, and grabbed Mike's pencil as he walked by.

"Let me use your pencil, Jerk."

Mike rose up out of his seat with a fighting look on his face.

The other boy tossed the pencil back to him, laughing.

"So keep it then, Jerk."

Mike took the pencil back to his desk. He stood there and stuffed the pencil deep into his pants pocket before he sat down again. His face was full of anger.

First period came, and Mike went to his gym class. There was an older boy helping out in the gym office. He handed out the equipment.

Mike stopped at the window for a basketball. The office boy picked one up and slammed it through the window into Mike's chest.

"Here. Catch, Jerk."

Mike couldn't help letting out a small grunt. He hadn't been ready for that. He turned away quickly, but he heard the older boy laugh.

Mike ran out onto the basketball court. He slammed the ball hard against the wooden backstop. He wanted the ball to go through the basket, but it didn't.

Just as he got the ball and was ready to try again, the coach blew the whistle for lineup.

Mike ran to get in his place. The squad leader saw him.

"Get in line, you jerk!"

Mike thought, the next one that calls me a jerk is going to get a face full of fingers.

During the basketball game, Mike forgot how mad he felt. He liked to play any game. He worked hard to help his team win.

He had made two baskets for them when the office boy came out onto the court. He had a yellow slip in his hand. He gave it to the coach, and the coach called for Mike. Then he gave the slip back to the office boy.

Mike ran to catch up with the office boy who started right back to the gym.

"Hey, who wants me?"

The boy didn't answer. He just opened the office door and went in. Mike followed him to get the slip. He knew the boy was trying to give him a hard time.

"Come on, give me that pass."

"Sure, Jerk. Take it." He tossed the pass onto the desk.

"Listen, I'm getting sick of you calling me 'Jerk' all the time." Mike's hands were made into fists.

"You are? Why? You are a jerk, aren't you?"

"No, you're the jerk!" And Mike hit the bigger boy hard on his nose.

Blood spurted from the boy's nose. He put his hand up, and when he saw the bright red blood on his hand, he changed color. Then he started to punch at Mike wildly.

Mike hated the look of the blood, but he was glad he had hurt the boy. Mike punched him hard in the stomach and then again in the face.

Mike was the winner easily by the time the off-duty coach stopped the fight.

"Knock it off, you two! Cut it out." The big man pulled the boys apart.

"He wouldn't tell me who wanted me. They sent for me to go somewhere, and he wouldn't tell me."

"Oh, I gave you the pass," the office boy said. "You can read it for yourself." He tried to wipe the blood off his face with the bottom of his tee shirt.

"Go into the washroom and get that nosebleed stopped. I'll take care of this jerk," the coach said.

"Come on, the Boys' Vice-Principal will want to hear about this."

Mike walked over to the main building with the coach. He wished he'd had time to change into his long pants. He hated to have girls see him in his gym trunks.

The coach took Mike into the office. He put all the blame on Mike.

"That temper of his is going to get him into real trouble some day. There's only one place where jerks like that end up–jail."

"I'll take care of him, Coach. Thanks for bringing him over. Is the other boy all right?"

"He'll have a sore nose, but he'll be okay."

"Send him over when he's cleaned up. I'll have to talk to him, too."

"Sure." The coach left and closed the door.

Mike sat in the wooden armchair. He looked down at his dirty tennis shoes and waited.

"How did it happen, Mike?"

"I don't know."

"Now, come on. Level with me. It takes two to make a fight. What happened?"

How could Mike tell him? How could he tell him that it began with a word? "Jerk!" Lots of guys get called "Jerk." Mike didn't know why it made him so mad. It just did. And somehow, everybody seemed to know it. Nobody would believe that it was a good enough reason to fight. Mike didn't really believe it himself.

"He wouldn't tell me who sent for me on a pass."

"So you hit him?"

"He called me a jerk."

The Man, as the boys called the boys' vice-principal, looked through his file box. He found a stack of cards. They were Mike's record at the school.

"This is your fifth fight this year, Mike."

"I know it."

"Your foster mother will have to come in again."

"I know."

The Man put the cards down and walked around his big desk. He sat on the edge of the desk and looked down at Mike.

"How many foster homes have you been in, Mike?"

Why did he ask that? Mike wondered. Mike knew exactly how many, but he didn't tell the Man.

"I don't know."

"You're not helping me much, Mike. How can I help you if you won't level with me?"

"I don't know." Mike looked down at his feet. He wished again that he had his street clothes on, instead of his gym clothes.

The Man looked tired. Mike knew he wanted to help, but Mike couldn't let him. He just couldn't let him. Mike would have to tell him things. And Mike was never going to let anyone know anything important about him again. It hurt too much.

"Well, Mike. You'll have to go home, I guess. You go back over to the gym and get your clothes. I'll have your letter ready when you come back."

Mike picked up the letter about twenty minutes later and left the school. It was funny to walk home and see only little kids on the streets.

He walked up on the porch of the house, and then he stopped. He stayed out of sight by the screen door. He could hear his foster mother talking on the phone. She was talking about Mike!

"Yes, I know he's been in nine foster homes since he was six. He's been okay here. Oh, we've had to go to school once in a while because he gets into fights. But he's been okay with us. It's just that I'm going to have another baby soon. I want to use Mike's room for the new baby. We just won't have room for Mike anymore."

She stopped, and Mike knew she was listening.

Then she said, "Okay. Well, that's why I called you now. I figured it would give you more time to find another place for him. No, I won't tell him until you have a new home. I promise."

Mike waited until she hung up the phone. He heard her go into the kitchen. She turned on the water at the sink. While she did that, he opened the screen door and sneaked down the hall to the back of the house.

He went into his room. He had kept this one longer than any other room. Now it wasn't his any more.

He didn't take much with him. His best black sweater with the gold buttons would keep him warm. His wallet held all the money he'd been saving. He would count it later.

He took the blue ribbon off the wall. He'd won it in a track meet last spring. He put the ribbon in his wallet, too.

Then he took the key to the house out of his pocket. He put it on the dresser. They wouldn't have to worry about his coming back.

He waited until he heard his foster mother go out into the back yard. He knew she would be expecting him. The school people always called before sending a kid home. He would have to move fast.

He took a last look around the room and slipped out and down the hall. He closed the front screen door softly and went quietly down the front steps.

CHAPTER 2

Mike walked to the corner and looked to see if a bus was coming. He was lucky, for once.

The bus pulled up and stopped. Mike got on and paid his fare from the lunch money in his pocket.

Then he sat down by a window alone. He looked out at the neighborhood and said good-bye to it in his mind.

Since the bus was almost empty, he decided it was safe to see how much money was in his wallet. He counted it carefully. Sixteen dollars. How far could he go on sixteen dollars?

Mike decided that he would ride as far as he could on this bus. Then he'd figure out what to do next. He would have to watch out for police cars, too. He wasn't quite big enough to look sixteen years old.

When he got off the bus, he was in the busy downtown part of the city. A lot of people were walking around there.

He was hungry, so he went into a coffee shop and ordered a hamburger and coffee. It was funny to be out of school in the middle of the day like this. Mike felt sort of excited. It was better than waiting for them to send him off to another foster home.

After he ate, Mike walked along the street again. He looked in the windows of the stores. There were a lot of pawn shops and jewelry stores. Their windows were full of interesting rings and watches.

He came along to an alley between two stores, and suddenly he stumbled over something. It was a little kid all huddled up against the building.

"Hi! I almost stepped on you, kid."

The little boy looked up at Mike. His chin was shaking and tears filled his eyes.

"Did I hurt you, kid?" Mike bent down to see what was making the kid cry.

The boy just shook his head slowly.

"Then what's buggin' you?"

"I'm lost."

"Oh, you're lost. Do you know what street you live on?"

The boy nodded his head and two big tears ran down his face. "I know, but I can't read!"

Mike smiled. "Well, *I* can read. What's the name of your street, kid?"

"Olive Street." The boy stood up and rubbed the tears around on his dirty face with his dirty hands.

Mike stood up, too. "You don't really have to be able to read to find a street, kid. All you have to do is to ask some guy." Mike pointed to a man standing in the doorway of a small grocery store. "Go ahead. Ask him."

But the kid backed up and leaned against Mike. He shook his head.

"Don't be scared," Mike said. "Watch. I'll show you how."

Mike went up to the man. "Hey, mister, can you tell me where Olive Street is?"

"Sure, kid," the man said. "It's behind you. See that signal back there? That's Olive."

"Thanks, mister."

Mike went back to the little boy. "See, that was easy. Now you go back up to that signal, and that'll be your street. You'll know your way then. Okay?"

Mike turned the kid in the right direction and pushed him a little. "Go home now, kid. You're not lost anymore."

Mike turned and walked along his own way again. Suddenly, the words he said to that kid made a lump come into Mike's own throat. ***He*** didn't have a home to go to. ***He*** was still lost.

He tried hard to get rid of the lump. Then he turned around to see if he could see the little kid.

There he was, right behind Mike!

"Hey, I told you to go home, kid."

The little boy looked up and slowly shook his head. He didn't smile. Mike could tell he wasn't going to quit following either.

"If I take you, will you go home?"

"Okay."

The kid tried to take hold of Mike's hand, but Mike put both his hands in his pockets. They walked back toward Olive Street.

"How old are you, kid?" Mike asked.

"I'm six."

"How come you're not in school?"

"I only go in the morning. But today I didn't go." The kid walked fast to keep up with Mike.

"Why didn't you go today?"

"My mother wouldn't take me."

"Oh."

They walked along without talking until they got to Olive Street.

"Now, here's your street," Mike said. "Which way do you live?"

The kid looked carefully both ways.

"That way," he said at last. "I live up that way."

They turned left and walked on again.

There weren't so many people here. After a couple of blocks, there weren't any stores. There were only old houses and apartments.

"Are you sure this is right, kid?"

"This is right," the kid said.

They walked six more blocks before the kid finally stopped. He pointed to a small brown house with a broken fence around it.

"That's where I live," he said. He didn't look very glad to be home again, Mike thought.

"You were a long way from here, kid. Your mother is probably looking all over for you." Mike hoped she wouldn't blame *him* for the kid's wandering off so far. "You'd better go in now and see if she's there."

The little kid looked as if he was about to cry again. He put his head down and slowly shook it. Mike knew he wouldn't go in alone.

"Well, come on, then. I'll go with you."

Mike pushed back the old gate and let the boy through. Mike left the gate open in case he needed to leave fast.

They walked up to the door. He knocked a couple of times. He didn't hear anything.

He knocked again. Then he tried to open the door. He was surprised to find it unlocked.

The kid pushed it wide and slipped in under Mike's arm.

"Come on in."

Mike stepped into the dark room. It was hot and smelled of stale cigarettes and beer.

A small woman was asleep on the couch. An empty beer can was tipped over on the floor beside a dishful of smoked cigarettes.

The kid went to the couch and tried to pull his mother up by her left arm. "Mama! Mama! Wake up!"

The woman grunted and opened her eyes a little. She didn't see Mike. She looked at the boy and then rolled over with her back to the room. When she talked, her words were hard to hear.

"Go 'way. Leave me alone, worthless little jerk!"

The little boy put his hands in his pockets. His head was down. Mike could see his chin start to shake again. He didn't look at Mike.

"She's just talking in her sleep, kid. She doesn't mean it. She'll be all right when she wakes up. Why don't you eat something and watch a little TV? Want me to make you a sandwich?"

The boy still wouldn't look at Mike, but he nodded his head. Then he led Mike into the kitchen.

Mike took one look at the kitchen, and a whole lot of memories came back to him. He remembered how he used to reach up to get a loaf of bread from the shelf when he was six. He could almost taste the thick peanut butter he used to try to spread on the bread. Now he knew why he hated peanut butter so much.

He looked around this kitchen. Sure enough, there was the loaf of bread and the jar of peanut butter.

The little boy watched him make the sandwich. Then Mike looked for something the kid could drink. He was lucky. Behind a six-pack of beer there was a bottle of fresh milk.

Mike had to wash one of the dirty glasses in the crowded sink. Then he poured a glass of milk and took it into the living room.

The boy climbed into the old arm chair, and Mike put the milk on the table beside him.

While the kid chewed hungrily on the sandwich, Mike turned on a kids' cartoon program on TV.

"There you go, kid. You're all set. I've got to go now. Take it easy."

The kid looked at Mike over the edge of the glass of milk. He must have been pretty thirsty, too, Mike thought.

Then the kid put the glass down. There was a rim of white milk around his mouth. But for the first time, he smiled. Mike could see that he was really a cute little guy.

"Well, so long." Mike tried to smile back, and then he went out the door fast.

Mike closed the old gate carefully behind him. Then he turned right and walked fast without looking back.

When he was back where the people were, he felt better. The street was more crowded than ever now. It was late afternoon, and they were all going home. Home!

Mike didn't want to think about that. He came to a movie theater. The tickets didn't cost much. Mike decided to go in.

He bought some salty popcorn and a big paper cup full of coke. There were a lot of empty seats inside. He sat down near the front and in the middle. The seat was lumpy, and the floor under Mike's feet was sticky from gum and spilled drinks.

The first picture went on right away. It was a war movie. There was a lot of noise and action in it that Mike liked.

The second show was different. It was about a messed-up kid. He was in a reform school for robbing a gas station.

Some counselor was talking to the messed-up kid. A lot of things the kid said were just what Mike felt. But then, the counselor guy said something that seemed to be for Mike himself.

The guy in the show said, "Just because somebody gives a man a name or a bad label doesn't mean the man has to believe the name is right. If I said you were a genius, you wouldn't believe me. So if somebody says you are no good, why do you believe *him?* You're the only one who really knows what kind of a person you are."

Mike watched the rest of the show, but he kept on thinking about that one thing, "You're the only one who knows what kind of a person you really are."

When the show ended, Mike went out of the theater.

Outside it was pretty cool and the street lights were all on. There were still a lot of people walking around.

Mike decided to walk on a darker, quieter street. Pretty soon he came to where there were big white buildings and the street was wider. Only a few people were on this street. Most of them were couples holding hands, except for a bunch of high school boys on the other side.

Mike walked along until he came to a short bridge over a tiny lake. The lights from the buildings were shining back at Mike from the water.

Mike leaned over the cement rail and looked at the water for a long time.

He felt funny, as if he was close to finding out a secret. But it didn't quite come to him until he scraped the back of his hand against the bridge.

He rubbed the sore place. It was hurt in the fight that morning. He smiled to remember the office boy's bloody face. *He* wouldn't call anyone "jerk" for a while, Mike thought.

And then, in that moment he knew the secret.

It was Mike's own *father* who called him a little jerk! Suddenly, he could remember his father after all this time. He could see his father looking down at him. Mike must have been very small, like the little kid he'd seen today. Mike didn't even know what the name "jerk" meant. He only knew by the sound of his father's voice and by the look on his face, that Mike didn't want to be a "jerk," whatever it was.

And then Mike thought of the movie he had just seen. The man had said, "Why do you believe it when some guy says you're no good?" Mike knew why, now. It is because the guy is your own father. And he says it when you are young. He says it when you are so young that you believe everything your father says.

Mike rubbed his sore hand and looked at the lake, all smooth and black below him.

But the other thing the guy said was what mattered. "You are the only one who knows who you *really* are."

And standing there on that bridge, Mike knew he *wasn't* a "jerk," and no one would ever hurt him with that word again. Mike might be mixed-up and wrong sometimes, but he was not worthless, not a "jerk."

Mike straightened up and took a deep breath of the night air that already felt cold. And then he heard a new sound.

He looked to his left, just in time to see one of the high school boys run across the street. He had forgotten all about them.

Then he heard a sound to his right. He turned his head and saw a small movement in the bushes. Suddenly, the hair on the back of his neck stood up. Those guys were after Mike!

He knew he could beat the one on the left to the end of the bridge. He'd have to get down near the water and find a place to hide.

He ran softly to the end of the bridge and started down the bank to the lake. Then two tall shapes came out of the bushes directly in front of him.

"Where do you think you're going?"

Mike stopped. Four other boys gathered around him. Six to one odds. The night began to feel very lonely now to Mike.

CHAPTER 3

"You're out kind of late, aren't you, kid?"

Mike looked at the hard, tough faces of the boys who stood all around him. They were out late, too, he thought.

"That's a nice sweater you're wearing," one boy said. He reached out and pulled at the sweater just a little.

"See if he's got any money, Jack."

The one called Jack looked older than the others. He had a little beard on the tip of his chin. His voice was deep but soft.

"How about it, kid? You want to give us your dough, or do you want to have us take it away from you the hard way?"

Mike didn't answer with words. He just reached out suddenly and gave Jack a good hard push. Then he started to run around and back up the bank to the street.

He heard splashing in the water as Jack fell into it, and the others stopped to drag him out. But somebody was coming after Mike.

Mike ran back down the street toward the brighter part of town. He knew there would be more people and more policemen there. But he knew that those hoods would be after him now for two reasons. They would figure he did have some money worth fighting for, and they would have to get even for Jack's fall into the lake.

Mike ran as fast as he could. He didn't get that blue ribbon for nothing. He could hear the footsteps behind him falling back.

He kept on at full speed until he couldn't hear anything any more. Then he let up a little and trotted into the busy part of the city again.

The stores were brightly lighted and there were people on the street. But now most of them seemed to be old men. Some of them were drunk. Most of them moved slowly and seemed to be living in their own little world. They didn't notice Mike as he trotted along.

Mike kept looking at the buildings. He wished he knew more about this part of town. He had to find someplace to hide, fast, not only from the hoods but from the police. It was nearly midnight, and the police would pick him up for being out after the curfew.

Finally, Mike spotted a restaurant that was open all night. There were quite a few people in there. He figured he could get something to eat and hide at the same time.

He looked to see if any of the hoods were behind him. He didn't see any of them, but a police car came cruising along toward Mike. He stepped into a doorway and let it go by. There was another car behind the squad car. Three people were in it. Detectives, Mike thought. The car was unmarked and the people inside were not in uniform. Two were men, one was a woman. They turned the corner, and Mike slipped out and into the restaurant.

Most of the men in the restaurant sat alone at the small tables. Mike went to the counter and asked for a piece of cherry pie and a cup of coffee. He made his voice as deep as he could. But the man behind the counter seemed only interested in Mike's money, not his age.

Mike carried the food to a table toward the back. There was a coat rack there, and he sat behind that.

He warmed his hands around the coffee cup. Slowly his breathing slowed down, and his heart stopped pumping so hard. He looked around and listened to the men talk while he ate his pie.

"Hurry up, Pete. Let's go before they close up that hotel."

The man called Pete sipped his coffee slowly. "Oh, relax. They never close that rat trap. They're too anxious to get your buck for their lousy bed. Don't worry. They'll let you in if you've got the dollar."

"Yeah. Well, I'm not going to sit here all night."

The men drank their coffee and got up to go. Mike drank his coffee fast so he could follow them. He could afford a dollar for a bed. He'd stay there and sleep.

The two men left, and Mike followed them. When he got out on the street again, he looked around to see if the hoods were anywhere around. Maybe the police car scared them off, he thought. He started to walk along after the two men.

He was right in front of a narrow alley when something tripped him. He fell hard and at the same time felt himself being pulled into the alley by the legs.

The alley was dark. Mike kicked his feet and tried to get up, but rough hands held him down from all sides. Somebody had a mean grip on his hair. Mike could feel tears come to his eyes from the sharp pain of the hair being pulled.

He felt hands moving over him until they found his hip pocket. He felt his wallet leave his pocket. He kept trying to get loose, but the hands kept him down. He wished they would talk, but the owners of the hands didn't say a word.

Then a sudden match lighted up the alley. Mike got a glimpse of one of the faces. The hoods had caught him!

The light went out. One boy said, "Only thirteen lousy bucks. We wasted our time."

Then the hoods began to beat Mike. Fists came at him from every direction. All Mike could do was double himself up and keep his head under his arms. Then the hoods stood up and started to kick him. Mike felt one terrific blow in the side. It felt like fire licking at his insides. Then he fainted.

When he woke up, he was struggling to breathe. Water filled his mouth and nose. Somebody was holding his head under water!

They let him up for a minute and then pushed his face under again. His chest burned like fire. He tried with all his might to get away. He *had* to have air!

Then they let him up again. This time he got a chance to breathe.

"Have a nice bath, sonny boy," somebody said. And Mike felt himself pushed deep into the water. The cold of it helped him think. This time he tried to swim forward.

It was hard to swim with his clothes on, and his shoes weighed him down. But he stayed up. He shook the water out of his eyes and tried to figure out where he was.

He was in the little lake! They had carried him all the way back just to get even! He tried to float so he could listen. He ached all over from the beating, and he was freezing in the cold water. But he would have to stay in the lake until those hoods were gone.

He watched the bank for movements. Everything was quiet. He stayed in the water until he began to feel sleepy. He knew he would have to get out if he was going to stay alive.

Slowly, he worked his way to the bank. Painfully, he pulled himself up onto the grass. He rested there for a while. Still, he heard nothing.

Finally, he felt strong enough to climb up onto the street. There was no one in sight.

Where could he go now? His money was gone. He was shaking with cold. And by the heavy feeling inside, he knew he needed a doctor.

Mike walked along the quiet, lonely street. All the sore places on his body began to hurt separately. His feet felt like ice in his soggy shoes. The shoes made a wet, hissing sound with every step.

Mike began to feel stiff from the cold and the hurt places. He walked six blocks without seeing anyone. The great tall buildings were not so brightly lighted now. They didn't seem beautiful to him anymore. They seemed cold and unfriendly.

Mike knew he would have to sit down and rest, soon. He wished he had something hot to drink. But his money was gone. He didn't even have any change. Those guys had taken everything. Even the blue ribbon from the track meet!

Somehow, that made Mike feel the worst of all. It was the first ribbon he ever won. It was something no one could buy. It had to be earned. And now it was gone.

A hard lump came into Mike's throat. He felt lonelier than he ever felt in his life before. Who cared about him? Who cared that he had been robbed and hurt? Who cared that he had no money and no place to sleep?

Mike walked on, going slower and slower. He stopped counting the blocks. His head ached from where his hair was pulled so hard. His side where he was kicked hurt so much he had to keep holding it with his hand.

Finally, he came to a doorway that gave a little shelter from the night breeze. A couple of pieces of folded newspaper lay on the floor. Mike remembered hearing that a newspaper keeps you warm. He sat down slowly and painfully like an old man. The pain in his side was really bad, now. He opened the newspapers and spread them over himself as well as he could. Then he leaned his head against the wall and closed his eyes.

For a while the pain in his side kept him awake, but finally he began to feel warmer and sleepier. At last, he fell into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER 4

The next thing Mike remembered was the sound of a woman crying. He opened his eyes and saw a room he had never seen before. It was a bright room, full of the morning sunshine.

Mike turned his head and saw his foster mother standing by his bed.

"Mike, you're going to be all right. You are in the hospital." She smiled at him and wiped her eyes.

Mike felt funny. His eyes didn't seem to see things as clearly as they usually did. And his body felt stiff and strange. He couldn't seem to think very well.

"How did you find me?"

"You fell asleep in front of a building, and the police who check the buildings during the night found you."

"How did you get here?"

"Dad had to stay with the kids, so your principal came and got me. After you didn't come home, and I found your door key on your dresser, I called the school. He's been helping me look for you. We've been up all night.

"Oh, Mike, I'm so glad you are all right." She started to cry again.

Mike looked at her. He thought she didn't care. But she stayed up all night looking for him! His mind was fuzzy and still wasn't working right.

"And the Man is here, too?"

"Yes, he's out in the hall talking to the nurse. Do you want to see him?"

"Sure."

Mike's mother went to the door and called the Man.

In a minute he stood beside Mike's bed. He looked much taller to Mike. He was smiling.

"You're feeling better, eh, Mike? You look better, too. You were pretty messed up when we first saw you."

Mike smiled. "Yeah, I took a swim in the lake."

The Man stopped smiling and looked serious. "How come, Mike?"

"Oh, I didn't mean to do it. I had a little trouble with some big guys, high school types. They took my wallet, all my money, and my blue ribbon from the track meet. Then they beat me up and threw me into the water."

The Man looked relieved. "I see. We thought you had jumped in, Mike."

"Well, I wasn't feeling very good, but I didn't feel *that* bad." Mike's head was beginning to feel clearer.

"My side feels funny. It's all hard and stiff."

Mike's mother came close to the bed on the other side. "You have four broken ribs, Mike. They've taped them up real tight so they will get better. That's why you're in the hospital."

"Oh, that must be where they kicked me."

"I guess so. You have a few other bumps and bruises, too, Mike. But you'll be as good as new in a week or so."

"And then you're coming back home with us, Mike," said his foster mother. "That is, if you want to."

"But I thought you needed the room."

She looked up at the Man. "You see, he *did* hear me talking on the phone. I knew he wouldn't run away just because of that fight."

"Is that right, Mike? Did you hear your mother talking on the phone?"

"Yes, I was coming home with the letter you gave me."

"Well, Mike," his foster mother said, "after last night I know that you belong with us. We were so worried about you. I'd never rest easy not knowing if you were all right." Her eyes filled with tears again as she looked down at Mike. "I guess I didn't know how much I'd come to love you, Mike."

"Gosh, Mom. Don't talk like that." Mike felt sorry for her and glad for himself all at the same time.

"She was pretty upset, Mike," the Man said. He put his hand on Mike's shoulder. "So was I."

" Do you want to stay with us, Mike?"

"Sure, I do. I like it at your place. You can put the new baby in with me, if you want to."

She smiled at Mike. “Well, we’ll figure something out. You just stay quiet now and rest. I’ll be back to see you tonight.”

“You’ll be hearing from me, too, Mike. You lie back there and watch TV and come back to school as soon as you’re well,” the Man said.

“Thanks,” was all Mike could say.

After they left he stared out of the window and tried to understand what had happened. Last night he had been so alone. Now, he felt loved and wanted. Really loved and wanted for himself.

The door of his room swung open again. A nurse came in.

“Hi. How about some breakfast?”

She hurried around, raising him up on the pillows and fixing his tray where he could reach it.

“You must be a real Somebody around your school to have the Boys’ Vice-Principal chasing around all night looking for you. You would have thought you were his own kid, the way he was acting,” the nurse said.

Mike looked at her. “Really?”

“Sure, I figured you must be the best speller or the baseball player in his school.”

“I’m not anything,” Mike said. But his heart felt warm to think that the Man had been that worried about him. And his foster mother loved him, how about that?

The nurse uncovered the dishes on his tray. The smell of eggs and bacon made Mike know how terribly hungry he was.

"Well, you eat your breakfast, now, while it's hot."

"Okay," Mike said.

The nurse left the room.

Mike looked at the good breakfast on the tray. Then he thought of what the nurse had said. The Man had acted as if Mike was his own son! Even though Mike hadn't had a chance to tell him about his not really being a "jerk," the Man had worried about him. And so had his mother.

Feeling very worthwhile and important, Mike picked up his fork and took a heaping mouthful of good scrambled eggs.

The nurse stuck her head back in the door. "Everything okay, Mike?"

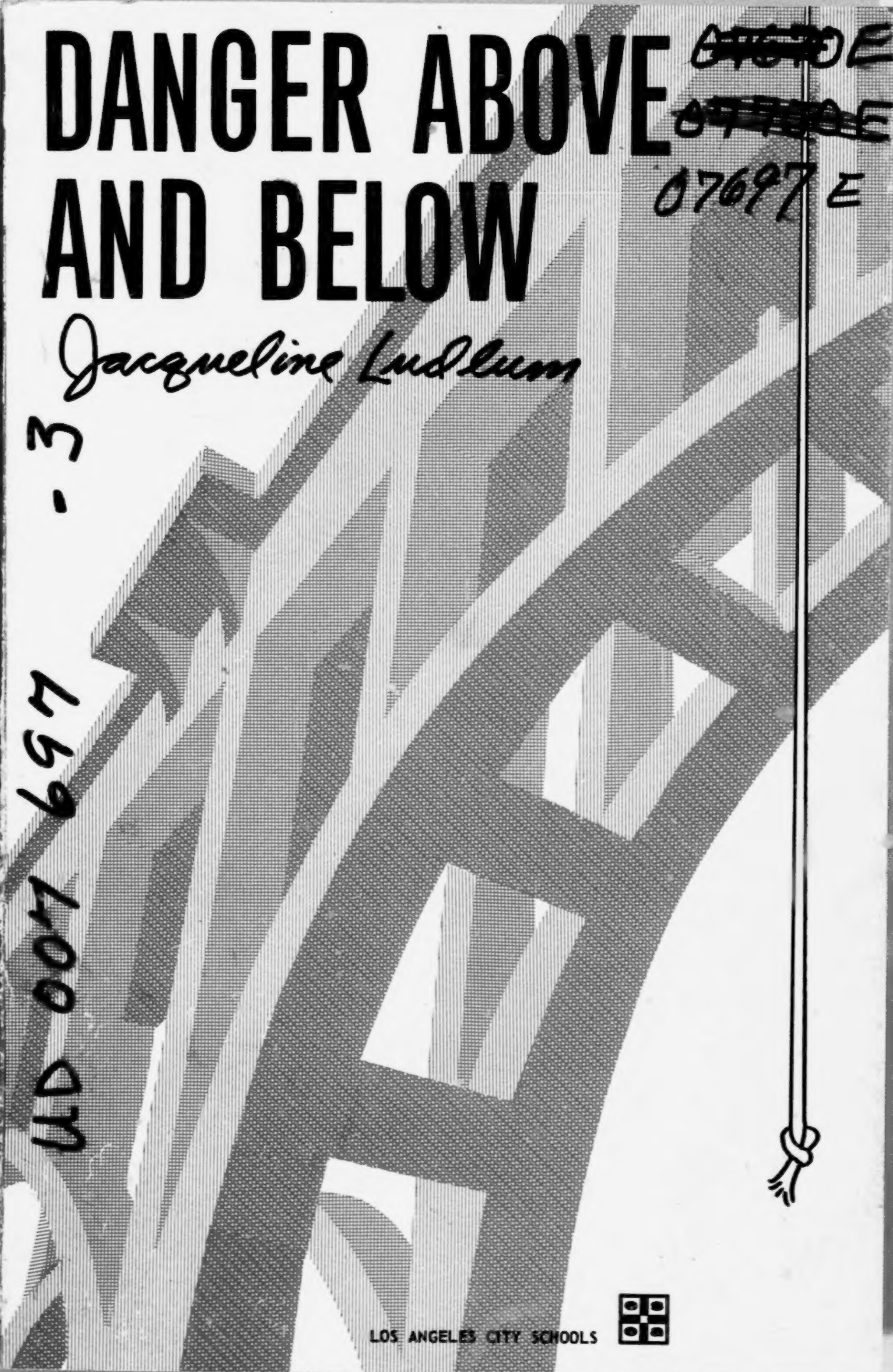
"Everything," Mike said. "*Everything* is A-okay."

[illegible]E
[illegible]E
07697 E

DANGER ABOVE AND BELOW

Jacqueline Ludlum

UD 007 697 -3



LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS

ED026425

UD 007 697 - 3

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

DANGER ABOVE AND BELOW

by JACQUELINE LUDLUM

B7 English

LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS
Division of Secondary Education
Specially-Funded Programs
Publication No. ESEA 4-9
1967

This publication was developed with funds provided by the federal government under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

APPROVED:

EVERETT CHAFFEE
Associate Superintendent
Division of Instructional Planning and Services

ROBERT E. KELLY
Associate Superintendent
Division of Secondary Education

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many of the persons who took part in developing reading selections for B7 English have been recognized and thanked in the introductory pages of *Voices of Youth,* the anthology for B7 English. Special appreciation is expressed here to Stanton Presnall, of Gage Junior High School, who took time to read, evaluate, teach and have his pupils evaluate *Danger Above and Below* in a trial edition. Al Kaelin, Consultant, Pilot Projects, designed the cover.

HARRIETTE F. WILLIAMS
Pilot Projects Coordinator
Specially-Funded Programs

THOMAS O. LAWSON
Administrative Coordinator
Specially-Funded Programs

DANGER ABOVE AND BELOW

CHAPTER 1

"I hereby place you on probation for the next six months." The judge looked stern. James and Willie felt all the eyes of the courtroom visitors on them. Ma yanked at Willie's arm when he seemed to turn away from the judge's high desk.

"Stand up, or I'll bash you good," she whispered angrily as she stood beside the boys.

Even if he was fifteen and way taller than she, Willie was afraid of his Ma. He had always been afraid of her. James, who was a year younger than Willie, would talk back, but not Willie. He stood up, and there was real fear in his face. What would the judge do to them? What would Ma do to them?

That was most of the trouble. He was afraid of Ma, but James wasn't. James could talk him into anything. He'd get the blame, and the beating.

Willie remembered only too well he hadn't wanted to take the car, but James had talked him into something again. James had said, "Who cares? We're only going to take it a little ways."

Well, that crazy James drove it a little ways—right into a telephone pole inside of two blocks. The cops came, Ma came, and here they were.

They had been in a little trouble before, but nothing liike this. The NAACP had a lawyer for them because their Ma sang in the big neighborhood church, and besides, everybody liked Ma. Ma always said, "If nothing else happens to me in this life, I'm goin' to make good boys out of you even if I have to do it alone." Their Pa was killed three years ago in a car accident. It was rough on Ma with six kids; so everybody helped, except James, who was always messin' off.

Willie was scared. The judge hit on the desk with his hammer thing.

"Because of your mother's guarantee that you will behave yourselves in the future, and the fact that she will pay for the damage to the car, I am putting you two boys on probation for six months and release you into your mother's custody. However, the court is attempting to arrange it so that four days a week during the rest of the summer you will work in the neighborhood, cutting lawns, cleaning up the youth center, and helping out in community projects. Your probation officer and mother will report directly to the court as to your conduct. The money you make will be used to help your family. In addition, we are going to try something different with you boys, so two days a week you will attend a day camp which has offered to take you and we'll see if the out-of-doors might help you grow up into good citizens."

The judge looked at the papers in front of him. By now Ma was talking to a policeman and the two boys stood there with heads down.

"Next case," the voice boomed out.

Ma came toward them. She looked like a truck going 80 miles an hour. Willie was sure she'd bash them right there on the spot, but she didn't. Instead she put her big arms around them and started to cry.

For the first time he could remember, James seemed to be sorry for what he had done.

"You hear me, boys, you're goin' to make good. You don't, and I'll bash you." Ma was still crying as she said it. They made a strange little group with arms around each other, faces together, and all three of them crying.

"Okay, okay, let's move outside the courtroom." The officer headed them gently towards the side door and into an office where they talked to the man who would be their probation officer. He seemed like a pretty good guy. Even James behaved himself and listened politely.

"Fellows, every Monday and Tuesday for the rest of the summer I will pick you up and take you to a day camp on the other side of town. It's at the base of the mountains and they have lots of activities." Mr. Hanson was the guy's name. He kept on talking, telling them about the horses they'd ride, the hiking, and so much else that both of the boys were not able to remember everything.

"Mrs. Taylor, have James and Willie ready by 7 a.m. next Monday. They are to wear tennis shoes, T-shirts, and jeans. Better have them bring sweaters, just in case." Mr. Hanson turned to Ma. "May I talk to you a minute, Mrs. Taylor? Boys, stand outside."

They stood in the outside room for a short time, and then James said, "Dumb old stuff. Bunch of creeps. Cuttin' the grass. I hate all that bunk." James was standing on one foot and then the other. He never could stand still. Then he pulled at his collar. "Ma always trying to make us so good."

"You shut up, James. I'm sick of hearing you gripe all the time. I'm glad we didn't get the book thrown at us. Now you hear me–hear me good. You and me are goin' do what the judge said even if I have to bash you one." Willie was tired of getting into trouble because of James. At last he was going to stand up to him.

"Aw, Willie, don't get so mad," said James. He looked at his brother in complete surprise.

"Then you behave." Willie knew James wouldn't behave, but it made him feel better to have told him off, for once.

"All right, Mrs. Taylor, have the boys ready by 7 a.m. next Monday." Ma and Mr. Hanson came out of the office.

Ma and the two boys walked toward the door.

CHAPTER 2

"Willie, you got your sweaters? I want you boys to look like something when you get to that day camp." Then Ma held out a large paper sack to James.

"Aw, Ma, I don't want to take this bag of stuff with me." James was griping, as usual.

"Mr. Hanson said they'll give you lunch, but you'll get hungry and be mighty glad for a little extra. Mind your manners. James, you do what you're told. No sass, you hear?" Ma let him have a light slap across the top of his head. James had learned long ago to duck at the right time. "Willie, you see that your brother behaves."

"Yeah, Ma. I sure will." Willie meant it, too, when he answered her.

The boys stood on the curb and waited for Mr. Hanson.

It didn't take long.

"Morning, fellows. Hop in."

They drove a couple of blocks and got on the freeway. It was going to be hot this day. Even at 7 o'clock it was warm with plenty of smog. Willie's eyes were beginning to water as the car got into the heavy traffic and closer to the mountains.

Mr. Hanson told them about the camp. The boys in their group would be about their age. They would all come from homes where the fathers made quite a bit of money at their jobs. They would be using the swimming pools of kids in the day camp.

"They usually go swimming first thing and then horseback riding. You fellows ever been on a horse?" he asked.

"No sir," said Willie.

"It's great fun."

"That's phoney. I'd rather be—" Before James could say another thing, Willie had grabbed his leg above the knee and squeezed just as hard as he could. James let out a yell.

"He'll like the horses, Mr. Hanson," said Willie.

The rest of the ride was very quiet.

Soon they were driving through a park. Willie thought about the sweaters and the heat. "We won't need the sweaters today, Mr. Hanson."

"No, Willie, but you can never be sure. Oh, there is Mr. Kayser, the camp director. He's a good guy. You'll like him." Mr. Hanson parked the car near a tree and they all got out and walked toward Mr. Kayser.

"Mr. Kayser, I'd like you to meet the two boys I told you about. This is James, and this is Willie Taylor."

Mr. Kayser was a short man, but with powerful arms. Willie noticed that his eyes were soft and he smiled as he extended his hand to them.

James didn't know that he was supposed to shake hands with him. So Mr. Hanson said, "James, shake hands with Mr. Kayser."

It was a strong hand shake and James was embarrassed by not knowing what to do.

"Okay, boys, I'll see you later this afternoon. Mr. Kayser will take good care of you." Mr. Hanson got back into the car and drove off.

"This way fellows." Mr. Kayser led them through the trees. In the clearing was a huge area of grass. On one side of the grass was a flagpole. Around the base of it was a large group of kids. Willie figured they went from real little kids to boys a few years older than he was. Most of them were dressed in T-shirts and jeans, even the girls. They all looked at them as they came closer. James and Willie were uncomfortable with all eyes on them.

"Rod, Rod Forrest, come here a minute." Mr. Kayser called out to a tall, well-built fellow who left a group of boys about Willie's age. Rod walked toward them. He must have been six feet six and solid as a brick wall. He looked to be about twenty or twenty-one years old.

"Hi. Welcome to camp. I'll be your counselor. There are ten in our group with you two, and we call ourselves the Top-Notchers. All the little kids look up to us because we're older and we do more action things. We're sort of big brothers, too. Well, you'll get the idea as we go along." He shook hands with them and headed them toward the older boys who were sitting on the grass nearby.

"Men, meet James and Willie Taylor," said Rod. There was a noticeable silence as the boys looked over the two newcomers. Finally, one blond-haired, short boy stepped toward them and stuck out his hand. "Hi, my name is Morrie Hinson. Glad to meet you."

Willie smiled and knew he liked Morrie right away. James just stood there not knowing what to do. Morrie shoved his hand in James's. "Nice to meet you, James."

That did it. The other boys of the group were soon introducing themselves and Willie and James were all grins.

Just then a bugle blew, like at school each morning. All the kids ran towards the flagpole and stood at attention as the flag went up to the top of the pole. Then everybody sat on the grass, and Mr. Kayser began to talk.

"Good morning. Hope you had a good weekend. We have a big day planned. The station wagons will take us to the swimming pool. After an hour there, we go to the stables. Then to the dam. The Top-Notchers have their own activities all day." Then he went on giving all the instructions for the other groups.

"Okay, guys, into the first wagon. Last one in gets thrown into the pool." Rod had no sooner said that and the boys shot towards the first car. Willie just managed to get in ahead of Morrie, but James was too busy tying his shoe. James was last.

"Oh boy, James, you get tossed in," Morrie yelled over at James, who was barely inside the tail gate.

The wagon bumped down the dirt road toward the main highway with boys jammed inside.

There was lots of noise that morning at the pool. One big yell came from James, and it was followed by a terrific splash. The boys laughed good-naturedly as James came sputtering up to the surface of the pool. James was laughing most of all.

CHAPTER 3

After swimming, the Top-Notchers climbed back into the wagon and headed for the stables. As they crossed over a broken-down wooden bridge, Morrie told Willie about the cloak and dagger.

"We eat and then we're going on a Cloak-and-Dagger caper," said Morrie, and his eyes lighted up while he explained it to Willie and James as they bounced along the old road.

"Cloak and dagger? What's that?" James looked worried. "A dagger is a knife, but what's a cloak?"

"Like that kook, Batman. He wears one," said Morrie.

"Oh yeah." James was pleased with himself.

"It's neat. There's this big storm drain that goes for miles underground with all sorts of leads going every which way. Man, it's dark inside. The little kids get in there and they want to scream and holler, but we're not supposed to be in the drain in the first place; so we have to be quiet or else the flood control inspectors might report us." Morrie's eyes were all excited as he talked about the weird feelings and how in some drains you have to crawl on your hands and knees.

"One time when I was only eleven, I was in there and I got away from the rest of the kids. I found out later that they were trying to give me the slip. Boy, was I scared, especially when a dumb little jerk tripped me and I fell and got all cut up. But it's great. Better than a spooky movie, because you're doing it; nobody else."

Willie was wide-eyed. "I don't think I'd like that too much."

"Aw, you're a chicken, Willie," said James. "You're a chicken."

"I'm not, but well, I – you'd be scared too, James." Willie was sorry he hadn't faked it. James would never let him forget what he said about being scared.

"Willie, it's great. Makes your guts get tied in knots. Besides, the Top-Notchers are the fearless ones of the drain." Morrie threw an arm around Willie's shoulder. "I'll show you the secret passages."

"Better hold his hand, too," teased James.

"Shut your mouth, James," Willie shot back to him.

At that moment they pulled up in front of the stables.

It was nice and shady under the big trees where they had their lunch. During this time there was lots of horseplay. Willie turned out to be the best Indian wrestler, while Morrie was the best shadowboxer. Another kid named Joe could eat the most, and somebody called Fred drank the most cokes. Willie and James did a balancing act, with Willie holding up James from his knees while James stood on his hands. First off, all the other Top-Notchers were trying it.

Rod began to explain the plans for the rest of the day after everybody had a chance to roughhouse for a while.

"It's Cloak and Dagger today. I'll take half of you and start in the main entrance of the drain through Dirty Gulch. Because of Dirty Gulch, we'll get a ten-minute head start. Morrie, you take the other half. Give us ten minutes and then start for the catch basin. First group to reach the overhead grill gets to pick today's final activity," Rod called out his group. "Willie, Fred, Sam, Joe, and Eddie, you'll go with me. Morrie, you take the other guys. James, you go with Morrie. Okay, everythin' straight? Remember, no noise. I saw a drain inspector on the way to camp today."

Rod and his team started off towards Dirty Gulch. Morrie and his team sat on the grass and watched them struggle down the side of the wash.

CHAPTER 4

Willie was glad he didn't have his good sweater with him. Man, it was a mess in the wash. No wonder they called it Dirty Gulch. They had to slide down the cement side of the bank. Because there wasn't much water coming through the big drain during this time of the year, a slimy, slippery three- or four-inch sea of mud covered the bottom, but just enough water did come from the drain to keep it gluey and moving a little. To try and walk in the stuff was even worse. Willie discovered that the bottom wasn't even. He slipped into a muddy hole almost up to his waist. Rod helped him out.

"Forgot to warn you, Willie. That's why we get an extra ten minutes. It takes at least that long to get through this stuff before you can enter the drain."

"Boy, Rod, this is the awfulest stuff I ever saw. My Ma would never believe it." Willie knew he'd have to be more careful.

The group was slipping and sliding over the sticky mess. Even Rod fell a couple of times. It seemed like a long time they'd been in the mud, and there was still the distance of a city block to go to the opening of the drain.

"We've got to go faster, fellows. Stick closer to the wall over here. It seems drier." Rod was at the wall and using his hands on the rough cement siding to steady himself.

They made much more speed now, although Willie did step into a hole once more and got completely covered with mud. He found mud in his ears, his nose, and even in his pockets. "What have I gotten into?" he thought to himself. But he was too busy staying on his feet to worry much about anything else.

At last they reached the opening of the great storm drain. Rod could stand up and there was some space overhead. Willie was tall, but maybe six inches shorter than Rod. All the other guys were shorter than Willie.

"All right. All of you have been in here, but Willie. As part of being new, Willie, you have to bring up the rear. Might as well tell you that's the worst spot because you have to keep up. Let me warn you also, the guys will try to lose you. Everything will be okay until the drain turns and you can't see the opening or the overhead grill. Willie, the drain is always this high unless you take the one turnoff about halfway to the overhead. If you bump your head, back your way to the main tunnel, turn right, and catch up."

Willie felt as if he had been hit in the gut, but he was glad they were facing the inside of the drain; at least they couldn't see the terror that must surely be written all over his face. He wondered how James was doing.

The rest of the group–Fred, Sam, Joe, and Eddie –seemed to get a real kick out of this. Willie could only think about how he wished he were home. Even cutting twenty lawns would be better than this.

"Let's go. Morrie's team will beat us to the open grill if we don't hurry up." Rod started towards the black eye of the tube.

Willie could feel that he was walking up in the drain. Almost every other heartbeat he would turn around to see the friendly light, but each time it got smaller and farther away. Once he bumped into the side, and he felt something warm begin to trickle down his face. He put out his hand and used it to steady himself. Ahead of him it was absolutely black. There was the constant "thump, thump, thump" of feet, but pretty soon he sensed that even that sound was getting farther and farther away from him.

He wanted to scream when he looked behind him and saw no light. Never in his life had he been so alone, so scared, so terrified.

"I can't panic," he thought. "Just keep going, Willie." He said it real quiet, but it made him feel a little better. How he wanted to run, but that was crazy. He'd just have to think it out. If only he had a flashlight, but Rod would never let you use a flashlight. Willie knew down inside that he had to get through this. He had to. He was a man, and a man can't be afraid.

His hand kept feeling the wall. He couldn't hear anything now, but his own breathing and the thump of his tennis shoes on the cement. A little water was trickling through the drain, and he could hear and feel it sometimes. For the first time he smelled a kind of wetness. It was like the back porch on a washday when Ma kept the window closed. Yeah, you could smell the creepy blackness.

He kept moving slowly, hands outstretched to balance himself.

Bump! Willie was stunned for a second. He had made the wrong turn and had gotten in that off tunnel. He tried to open his eyes wider, but all he saw were the blinding inner stars of his mind. He was on his knees. Which way should he go? He was panicky. Then he felt something cross his face. It was like a gentle brush, but it was spooky. Willie remembered the spider that bit him years ago. Ma called it a black widow. He recalled how sick he had been. He stood perfectly still. "There are spiders in here." He shivered.

He'd try to stand up. If he couldn't he was still headed the wrong way. Then he'd turn around and start back, being sure to turn right at the end of the passage.

"Great, great," he whispered. "I can stand up. I must be headed right."

Carefully he kept his hand on the wall, inching along slowly, feeling his way every step. Soon the wall turned so he headed towards the right. Would it never end, this awful blackness?

But he seemed to get surer of himself as he continued walking. It wasn't too long before he thought he saw some light far, far off. "Just keep walking, Just keep walking," he repeated over and over to himself.

Soon he could make out Rod and the rest of their gang. Morrie's bunch wasn't there. He started to run so that he would be sure to be there ahead of the other team.

As he puffed up to the light coming from the overhead grill, he felt a great deal of pride. He knew he had passed some kind of important test. He could take care of himself. He didn't panic under pressure.

CHAPTER 5

"Great, Willie. You did it! And with no help." Rod put an arm around his shoulder. "Say, you've a little blood on your face. Bump into a door?" All the fellows laughed.

"Sure did. A great big cement door." Willie wiped at the blood on his forehead with the one little part of his T-shirt that was still clean.

They kidded each other for a minute or two. About that time Morrie and the others began to come out of the blackness in the other direction.

"Okay, Rod, you beat us. What do we have to do?" Morrie seemed very disappointed that his team was not first to arrive.

"Let's wait until we get outside before we decide," said Rod.

Willie edged over towards James.

"How did you do, James? Man, was it as spooky for you as it was for me?"

"Spooky! That's only half of it. They had me at the end and I was always falling and bumping into the side walls. The guys had to come back and get me. I guess I held them back. Wally, that smart-off, really got mad at me." James was upset by the whole deal.

"James, we just got to keep up with these guys. They seem to like us, but they're watching, and maybe hoping, that we can't make it like they can. We got to prove that we can." Willie clapped a hand on James's shoulder. For the first time he could remember, Willie felt close to his brother, really close.

Rod's voice boomed out at that moment, "Morrie, help me boost up Wally so he can climb through the opening. He'll drop a rope to us. Careful, Wally. Look out for the inspector."

Rod and Morrie locked hands, and Wally was lifted up to the huge bars overhead. There was enough room to wiggle through, and Wally made it with no trouble. He then tied the rope from one of the bars and dropped it to the ones below. One by one the boys climbed up hand over hand. Willie now knew why Rod and Morrie were carrying long coils of rope over their shoulders all afternoon.

Willie found it easier to climb the rope than James, who puffed a lot before he got to the top.

"Say, James, you're not in such good shape." Rod kidded James.

"He spends too much time eating, watching TV, and griping," said Willie.

"I can climb just as good as you, Willie." James gave Willie a little shove as he said it.

"Okay, fellows, save your strength for the real climb later on." Rod watched the brothers closely.

The sun was hot. Willie figured they must have been in the drain about an hour or so. For the first time he realized how tired he was. He couldn't recall ever being so tired. Maybe they could lie on the grass in front of the grill, but instead Rod was marching on towards the old bridge they had crossed on the way to the stables that morning.

"What do we winners want to do for the rest of the afternoon?" Rod stopped for a minute and took a vote of his team.

"Suicide!" Eddie, Joe, and Fred yelled together.

"Okay, but let's stop at the old wooden bridge and introduce James and Willie to the 'parachute jump.' How 'bout that?" All the boys yelled their approval to Rod's suggestion.

"The 'parachute jump' is a gut-grabber." That is how Morrie began. By now they had reached the old wooden bridge. He continued, filling in the details for the two boys.

"First, you decide how far down you want to jump from the bridge. See, it's about fifteen feet from the roadbed of the bridge to the dried-up river below. You guys better jump off from the road at first–just to get the idea."

The eyes of Willie and James popped wide when they looked at the height from the road to the soft sand under the bridge.

"Now really look up," said Morrie. "See those four old boards that make up one side of the bridge? Each board is about four feet higher than the one under it. If you really want a kick, try jumping from the highest one. Bet it's a twenty-five-foot drop from the top to the sand."

By now Willie's mouth had dropped open. He looked at the bridge and back at Morrie who continued to explain the whole crazy business.

"Look here. You take the rope and tie one end of it to the top board. Make sure the rope is just long enough so your feet can't hit the bottom of the wash when you get to the end of the ride. You put a foot into a loop tied at the other end of the line, and hold on with both hands. Don't let go! Then jump out as far as you can so you won't hit the side of the bridge as you drop. You get a real jolt when you hit the bottom. Shakes your teeth clear up to the eye balls. Watch me; so you get the picture."

Willie stared in complete disbelief as Morrie climbed to the very top board of the bridge. The boy carefully checked to see that the rope length was right so he would not hit the floor of the wash; instead his feet would dangle one or two feet above the dry stream. Morrie jerked on the knot again to be sure it was okay.

He stood up, held the rope in his hand, grabbed the end of the rope that was looped, and slipped his right foot into it. Then Morrie jumped, swinging out in a great curve as he left the board.

"Geronimo!"

It was a bloodcurdling yell.

Willie wanted to close his eyes as he dreaded what he thought would happen–he would see Morrie spread all over the dirt. But he kept his eyes open and saw Morrie fly through the air. When he got to the end of the rope, the flying body jerked violently as the body weight caused the rope to pull tight. The boy dangled for a second or two, swinging back and forth like Tarzan did in a movie Willie saw once on TV. It was nuts. Imagine throwing yourself over a bridge with only a rope to save you from a broken neck.

"How 'bout it, James? Want to try it?" Morrie raced up the side of the river bank. "It's great! But you better try jumping off from the roadbed."

James made a grunt. Clearly he didn't want to try a "parachute jump."

"Aw, James, don't be a chicken. It hardly hurts at all. Might break an arm, but that's nothing for a big, brave man like you." Wally was still angry about the way James had acted in the drain, and he sounded as if he wanted to start a fight.

Wally kept on needling him. "But James is not used to all this man-stuff. Where he comes from they just–"

Before Wally could finish the sentence, Willie pushed in front of James and said, "Course we can do it. In fact, we'll do it together. Come on, James."

Willie grabbed James by the arm and yanked him towards the bridge. As he half-dragged his brother, he said excitedly, "You and me are goin' do this. Like I told you–they want us to quit. Well, we aren't goin' quit. You hear?"

"Willie, I don't think I can." James was trying to pull back.

"You're goin' to do it if I have to carry you. Come on." Willie kept pulling James towards the bridge.

When they got on the bridge, Rod was there and said to them, "Here's the rope, Willie. Tie it tight." Rod tossed it to Willie. "You've got to show 'em. You've got to prove yourselves. Good luck." The tall, young leader of the group said it in a low voice so only the brothers could hear. He stepped back and gave them each a friendly pat.

Willie tied the rope securely. He checked the large loop at the end of it.

"Okay James, put your foot in here." Willie carefully showed James what to do.

"Willie, I—" James looked sick.

Willie talked on, fast. "We'll jump together. Be sure you push off far enough so we don't hit the side as we go down. And hold tight as you can." Willie tested the knot once more.

They made a strange sight, standing on the edge of the bridge, locked together in the loop of the rope and holding on to the cord for dear life.

"Jump and push out," yelled Willie. Willie made a terrific leap, dragging James with him. As they sailed through the air, the sky and ground got all mixed up. Willie felt light-headed and silly. He sensed the awful tug of the rope as the bottom of the river came racing up to meet them. Nearing the end of the fall, they were crushed as one for a violent, terrible instant. James cried out. Willie was sure his head would snap off. Then there was the feeling of just swinging back and forth. All of a sudden, everything was so peaceful as the breeze whispered about his ears. It was a terrific thrill; made you tingle inside. Willie was smiling broadly. He liked it.

"Are we still alive, Willie?" James asked in a whisper.

"Yeah. Wasn't so bad. Want to try it again? Only higher?"

"Are you kiddin'?" James was frantically trying to slip his foot out of the loop. He seemed to hug the ground as he lay there panting for a second or two.

"Welcome to the Parachute Club," Morrie said and was beside them, helping Willie untangle himself from the rope.

"Big deal! You made a 'parachute jump.' We'll try you out on 'suicide.' That's where we separate the men from the boys." Wally looked at James with complete scorn; he turned, and walked toward Rod.

CHAPTER 6

The boys, led by Rod, had walked at least a half mile along the bank of the dried-out river in the direction of a huge concrete arch bridge built over the old arroyo. The river bottom dropped deeper and deeper as they neared the great bridge. It must have been a hundred or more feet high from the roadbed running across the top of the bridge to the base of the supports holding it up far below in the loose sand.

Rod had taken off towards the road over the bridge while the boys struggled through the bushes and dry grass to get to the bottom of the span which connected the two sides of land divided by the river that had no water in it at this time of the year.

Willie could hear the sound of a few cars as they drove across the bridge high above them. He looked up at the white clubfooted giant and made a low whistle.

"Wonder what this is going to be," Willie thought.

It didn't take long for him to find out and when he did, he was scared to death. Wally was right, the "parachute jump" was nothing compared to "suicide." Just nothing!

"Very simple," announced Morrie. "We're goin' to climb up the outside face of the arch using the ropes Rod is tying from the safety rail that goes along the road topside. Rod watches for the time when there are no cars and then he slips down on one of the ropes to the top of the arch. He will steady the rope for us as we climb up. Gee, it's great, Must be fifty or more feet across, once you're there, and pretty flat so you can mess 'round."

"Why do you want to go up there anyway?" Willie asked.

"To prove something," sneered Wally.

"What?" Willie couldn't believe they were supposed to climb that slick, dangerous support of the bridge to prove something.

"To prove you're not a chicken." Wally threw the words in James's face.

"I'm no chicken, but I'm not nuts either," shot back James.

"It's either put up, or shut up–Chicken!" Wally was determined to start something.

"Have you done this before?" asked Willie, still disbelieving the whole business.

"Sure, lots of times," said Morrie. "It's like the 'parachute jump'; the more you do it, the better you like it."

"I'll never like it," Willie told himself.

Just then came a shrill whistle. It was Rod signalling from above. He was on the top of the arch just under the road. Within a second the two ropes came falling at their feet.

"What are you goin' to do? Climb, or chicken out?" Wally demanded an answer.

"Aw, Wally, let up, will you? Give them a chance. I can remember when you, or any of us, climbed the first time. It was rough. So let up!" Morrie was taking their part. Willie knew why he liked Morrie. Morrie was an all-right guy for his money. Anyway, Wally let up on James.

Morrie, Wally, and all of the other fellows started to test the rope and talk about the knots that were tied into it, each an arm's length apart. They were laughing and comparing the amount of time it took them to climb the distance last week.

Willie pulled James aside and said, "James, we just got to climb. Do you think you can make it?"

"Maybe." James wasn't as sure of himself as he always had been in the past. Willie suddenly realized that he was the strong one. He had always been the strong one of the two. Why had he let James run the show up until now?

"Maybe, nothing! We're going to do it. We're as strong and as good as any of those guys. Besides, I want to do it for Morrie, and you've got to prove you can to Wally." Willie felt new confidence.

"Morrie, we'll do it." The two brothers walked back to the main group.

"Great!" Morrie pounded both Willie and James on the back. "I knew you'd do it." Then, in a lowered voice, he said, "Don't pay any attention to Wally; he's a sorehead most of the time."

"What do we do, Morrie, so we don't get killed? Don't want James and me to be angels on our first trip to 'suicide.'" Willie was kidding, but he didn't feel like it inside.

"It's easy. We go up two at a time on the rope. You just climb hand over hand. See, there are knots in the rope about an arm's length apart; gives you a tighter hold. We also tie on to the second rope as a safety. Now be sure to stay in the middle of the arch, because if you get too close to the end you could slip and–well, just stay in the middle." Morrie pulled on the rope again.

"Okay, Wally. You and me. And away we go." Morrie and Wally tied on to the safety rope and started up the outside curve of the arch. Willie didn't want to miss a thing that he should know about reaching the top safely.

With great sureness and speed, Morrie and Wally were making it over the face of the arch. Willie was fascinated by the skill of the boys. It looked so easy!

More anxious minutes passed.

Then they were at the top. They waved their arms back and forth. Willie could see them remove the safety rope. Then they tossed the two ropes down the face of the concrete.

Fred and Joe were ready as soon as they tied on to the safety. "Real simple," said Fred and he and Joe started up the giant pillar as effortlessly as a walk through the park.

The next two boys were on their way, and the next two.

"Okay, James, this is it." Willie grabbed the two ropes as they fell in front of them at the end of the long curved arch. Willie glanced up. He shouldn't have done that; it looked like an endless belt to nothingness.

CHAPTER 7

Willie checked the tie to the safety half a dozen times. They had been told that, as they climbed, Rod pulled up on the safety line so if they fell, or lost their grip, they would be checked before they could fall too far.

"Grab, James, and pull up like crazy. You go first so I can help you if you get tired." Willie gave James a reassuring pat as the younger boy took the climbing rope in his hands.

"Willie, I –" James stopped. Then he said, "I'll do the best I can."

"Man, you got to do better than that. Let's go."

James started up the curve, hunching over and walking up the cement as he lifted himself on the knotted rope in a hand-over-hand movement.

"Don't look down, James. Don't look down," Willie warned.

Willie began his climb.

As they got higher Willie noticed that a breeze blew up. He looked up and saw that James was edging over toward the side of the arch. Willie froze in his tracks for an instant.

"Move the other way, James. Move, move back!"

Willie yelled again when James continued towards the edge. James didn't seem to hear him.

"Move back, I say. Stop, James!" Willie screamed.

By this time, the two boys were halfway up the arch.

That crazy James doesn't know what he's doing, Willie shouted to himself and moved faster. He had to get to James before he killed both of them. His muscles ached as he pulled himself closer and closer to James. At that moment, he was able to take hold of James's leg and hang on to it.

Willie had the leg in one hand and was holding on to the climbing rope with the other.

"James, you dumb or deaf? I said you're going towards the edge. Now move the other way." Willie squeezed hard on the leg as he let it go.

"Okay, okay. I guess I was too scared to hear you." James began to move the other way.

"Keep your ears open, you nut." Willie started to breathe more evenly again.

"Hey down there. Everything all right?" It was Rod's voice. It sounded so far away.

"Okay, we decided to take the long way 'round." Willie's words were a lot funnier than he felt.

Another foot, two feet, ten feet – the two boys struggled on. Willie chanced a look downward. It was so far down, he got dizzy from the sight. He'd only think about getting to the top.

"Keep climbing, keep climbing. You're doin' great, James." Willie talked it up, as it seemed to encourage James.

They continued to climb.

"Just a little bit more. Come on, James. That a boy, Willie." It was Morrie calling to them from above.

Wally reached out and took hold of James. Then there was a hand for Willie.

They had made it. They had made it.

All the guys crowded around them, slapping them on the back and congratulating them.

"You're now in the most exclusive club in the world. We call it the Suicide Club." Rod was grinning. It was easy to see how proud he was of them.

"See, Wally, I told you they could do it. I told you." Morrie beamed.

Wally smiled sheepishly and said to James, "I take back what I said about being a chicken. Want to shake on it?"

"Sure, Wally, sure thing." James and Wally settled their differences then and there.

Up on top of the great arch it was cool. The boys yelled and got a kick out of hearing the sound of their voices bounce off the walls and boom back at them. The boys tried to see who could stand closest to the edge and look over. Or they relaxed by sitting on the level part of the arch which was ended by the thick wall that supported the roadbed of the bridge overhead.

Willie decided just to sit. He closed his eyes for a minute. Man, he was tired. He sat and enjoyed the luxury of it.

"All right, let's beat it down." Rod had looked at his watch and decided it was getting late.

The boys teamed up again for the descent. Willie and James realized that it probably would be harder to go down than it was to come up.

"Don't rush it, Willie," warned Morrie. "Just come down easy."

"Okay, Willie, James, let's go." Rod checked the ropes for them. Willie started down first. The boys felt their ways carefully, testing the flakey concrete as they dropped slowly over the outside face of the arch.

About three-fourths of the way down, Willie looked up; he didn't know why, he just did. In that moment Willie saw that James was hurtling down on him. What was happening? Willie had no time to holler, so he threw out his arm to stop James's fall, or try to stop him, if he could.

He felt a terrible jolt as James hit him. Could he hold on with only one hand? He sensed the ripping and tearing of clothing. Then in an instant the two boys were being swept over the edge of the arch. Willie watched helplessly as the sky and land whirled about crazily. They were twisted and tossed like birds in a wind storm. Then he felt the tightness of the rope as it slipped from his waist and grabbed violently under his arms.

Everything happened so rapidly. James and he were now swinging wildly from the safety rope about twenty or thirty feet above the river.

Willie strained every muscle and tugged within the loop of rope holding him prisoner. His mind was blurred, but he glanced upward and realized what had occurred. The climbing rope was dangling about two feet above them. It had broken.

"James, James. You all right?" Willie was barely able to get out the words he was so exhausted from the terrible effort of falling.

There was no answer.

Willie looked up and saw his brother hanging limply from the safety.

"Willie! James! Are you okay?" It was Morrie calling frantically from below.

"Yeah, yeah, but I'm not so sure about James." Willie said weakly.

Just then the feeble voice of James said, "Okay, man, I think I'm okay."

"Hold on, don't struggle. Rod probably realizes what happened and he'll let up on the safety and you'll slip down easy-like," shouted Morrie from far below.

The boys had heard the confusion of their fall and had run from the base of the arch to the spot in the riverbed under the two suspended brothers.

Just then Willie felt the slow, downward motion of their bodies as they inched closer to the ground. It was a wonderful feeling. Willie looked up anxiously at James whose feet were a foot or two above his head.

Then his feet touched the soft sand of the river bottom.

"Thank God! Thank God!" Willie murmured. "James, you all right?"

By now James was also touching the ground. His eyes were strangely glassy. "Yeah, Willie, I'm fine . . . I think."

"I can't believe it. I can't believe it. You guys are still in one piece." Morrie was looking at them and eagerly waiting to know how both boys felt. "Here, lie down, at least sit down, until we know if you're all right."

Both Willie and James obeyed Morrie.

"I can't tell if anything is broken. I seem to feel okay. How 'bout you, James?" asked Willie.

They lay there on the warm sand of the river getting back their strength.

What an experience! Willie knew he couldn't relive the terror of it without breaking down. So he closed his mind to it and just waited for his heart to stop pounding.

Just then Rod raced up to them carrying the broken rope over his shoulder.

"Guys, are you all right? Are you all right? I felt the rope snap. All I could do was hope the safety would hold. Man, I was glad I had five or six turns on the safety over the guard rail. Thought I might go over too, for a second! This has never happened before. Are you sure you feel okay?"

He looked over the boys and decided that there were no signs of serious injury.

"You fellas have passed every test and then topped the whole thing with an unbelievable Tarzan act. I can't tell you how proud I am of you both." Rod was deeply impressed and showed it.

The rest of the guys spoke their feelings freely.

Wally summed it up when he said, "Never have I seen anything like your guts. You're the greatest!"

"Want to try walking a little, James?" asked Wally.

Willie winked at Morrie. He thought to himself, "Man, what a growing-up day this has been."

They made a strange crew as they struggled back up the side of the river bank.

It had been a very full day.

CHAPTER 8

The Taylors — Ma, Willie, and James — stood up straight and tall in front of the judge's bench.

"Boys, I can't tell you how pleased the court is with your performance this summer. Mr. Hanson, your probation officer, along with Mr. Kayser and Mr. Forrest at the day camp, can't say enough about your success during the last two months. In addition, the people at the community centers are most generous in their favorable comments about your work efforts with them. The court finds your case very rewarding. Mrs. Taylor, Willie, James, congratulations."

Willie felt a lump in his throat. He wanted to say so much, but all that would come out was, "Thank you, Judge."

He wished he knew how to say what fun he and James had had that summer, and how he hated to see it come to an end. How could he tell of all the new things he had learned about the people he met since that last time they were in court? How did you say thank you for knowing all the guys at day camp? How do you talk about the importance of belonging to that bunch of good guys? How do you say what you feel deep inside about being glad to be alive?

"Thank you, Judge," said James, and it wasn't the old James talking. It was a new James. Willie liked his brother much more now.

"Judge, I want to thank you for letting my boys have this chance. I was afraid you were goin' to send them to reform school. You just can't know how they have changed because of this summer. You were sure right about being out-of-doors. It's all the boys talk about. I do thank you kindly."

Mrs. Taylor looked from one boy to the other. She wore the smile of a proud mother. Willie and James held their heads high.

"Next case."

07697E

FM AM 9 TRANSISTOR
FM
90 93 98 108
88 87
AM
90 120 160
60 53

-2

Voices of Youth

UD 007-697

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT

LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS

ED026425

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

VOICES OF YOUTH

B7 English

-2

UD 007 697

LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS
Division of Secondary Education
Specially-Funded Programs
Publication No. ESEA4-7
1967

This publication was developed with funds provided by the federal government under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

APPROVED:

EVERETT CHAFFEE
Associate Superintendent
Division of Instructional Planning and
Services

ROBERT E. KELLY
Associate Superintendent
Division of Secondary Education

TO THE TEACHER

For years many teachers have said that urban pupils should have reading materials which are closer to their interests and their characteristics. All of the reading materials in this anthology were written to meet these needs for urban pupils in B7 English.

Every selection is presented from a young person's point of view or with a young person's interests firmly in mind. Moreover, all of the selections were written by teachers or by writers well acquainted with the interests of young people. In addition, all selections have been taught successfully in B7 English classes and have been evaluated by consultants, supervisors, teachers, and pupils. The selections accepted for this volume were those approved by consultants, supervisors, and teachers and judged in tryout by a majority of pupils as being readily readable, readily understandable, and highly interesting.

As an aid to teachers, the selections have been grouped to correspond with the Course of Study for B7 English. Also, a manual for teaching the selections is being prepared and will be published separately. However, even with these aids and with a literature more closely related to pupils' interests and characteristics, an English class still must have an enthusiastic teacher who will meet the varied needs of culturally various pupils in a constantly new world.

ROBERT E. KELLY
Associate Superintendent
Division of Secondary Education

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many persons took part in the development of this anthology. Space does not permit identifying all of the 88 writers who showed their interest in the education of young people by taking time to write and submit manuscripts. The names of those writers whose works were chosen appear after titles in the text. Their greatest thanks will be the amount of interest that young people have had and will have in the writings.

In addition to writers, many other persons took an active part in the development of this anthology and, therefore, are recognized and thanked here for their accomplishments.

The English Advisory Committee, composed of the following members, gave thoughtful advice on many aspects of the program:

Rita Chavez, *Jordan High School*
Gertrude Dorsey, *Roosevelt High School*
Frank Hernandez, *Irving Junior High School*
Manila Lee, *Harte Junior High School*
Anne Nichols, *Belmont High School*

Special appreciation is expressed to the following department chairman and teachers, each of whom took time from his schedule to read and evaluate—and, in many cases, to teach and have pupils evaluate—an allotment of the selections in this anthology.

Nancy Detjen, *Berendo Junior High School*
Marvin Jaffe, Chairman of English, *Berendo Junior High School*
Eileen McDowell, *Berendo Junior High School*
Gene Satlin, *Berendo Junior High School*
Wilma Schmalzried, *Berendo Junior High School*
Maryellen Bowens, *Berendo Junior High School*
Del Davis, *Drew Junior High School*
Stanton Lee Presnall, *Gage Junior High School*
Donald Olson, *Markham Junior High School*
Mildred Vaughn, *Markham Junior High School*
Jude Nichols, *Virgil Junior High School*
Ruby Nix, *Virgil Junior High School*
Joan D. Peck, *Virgil Junior High School*

Al Kaelin, Consultant, Pilot Projects, designed the cover and prepared illustrations for the anthology.

Cover photograph used through the courtesy of the Radio Corporation of America.

Al Lalane, Editor for Specially-Funded Programs, reviewed a major portion of the selections in the anthology and gave valuable suggestions.

William Rosch, Secondary English Supervisor, Curriculum Branch, and Helen Burge and Donald Perryman, Supervisors of English/Social Studies, Junior High, Division of Secondary Education, patiently read and informatively commented on all manuscripts considered for inclusion in the anthology and actively participated in the many meetings necessary in the production of the anthology.

A. C. BROCKI acted as consultant for the three semesters the program was in operation. JACQUELINE LUDLUM acted as consultant for the first two semesters of the program, and MARILYN S. WILSON acted as consultant for the third semester. Special thanks are due to these consultants who screened all manuscripts, made necessary editorial changes, supervised tryouts in the schools, and supervised the final publication of the anthology.

HARRIETTE F. WILLIAMS
Pilot Projects Coordinator
Specially-Funded Programs

THOMAS O. LAWSON
Administrative Coordinator
Specially-Funded Programs

CONTENTS

TO THE TEACHER iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS iv
TO THE PUPIL ix

NEW PEOPLE, NEW PLACES

THE SHOES WITH A THOUSAND EYES 3 Morrie Greenberg
IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE HAIRDO 11 Jane Sprague
THE TWO-PARTY DRESS 15 Kathleen R. Smith
NOBODY'S GONNA TALK 'BOUT ME 19 Jane Sprague
OUT OF GAS 26 Kathleen R. Smith
LOVE, DOLORES 31 Jacqueline Ludlum
I'M JUST ME 36 John Durham
SHY BOY 46 Jane Sprague
BACKSTAGE 49 Robert Crumb
GIRL CRAZY 60 Jane Sprague
JUST A FEW LAUGHS 69 Jacqueline Ludlum

HENRY LEE AND THE PHOTOGRAPH 74 Jane Sprague

UNDERSTANDING A LARGER WORLD

THE BEACH 87 Jane Sprague
RAINY NIGHT 92 Lorenz Graham
I HAVE TO HAVE MUSIC 98 Jane Sprague
THE GERANIUMS 106 Robert Crumb
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU WANT! 119 Jane Sprague
AT PEACE WITH THE WORLD 128 Ted Richards
TIGERMAN 137 Jane Sprague
ELEVEN HAIKU 146 John Durham
SAM–THE SADDEST SITTER ON SUMMER STREET 148 Jane Sprague
THE FIGHT 157 Robert J. Franklin
GUM 164 Jane Sprague
GLORIA 166 Jane Sprague
POEM 174 Steve Wiley
DEAR MARILYN 175 Jane Sprague

ANIMALS

SNOW COUNTRY 187 Richard Hill Wilkinson
FOUR ANIMAL HEROES 192 Helen B. Walters

ADVENTURE

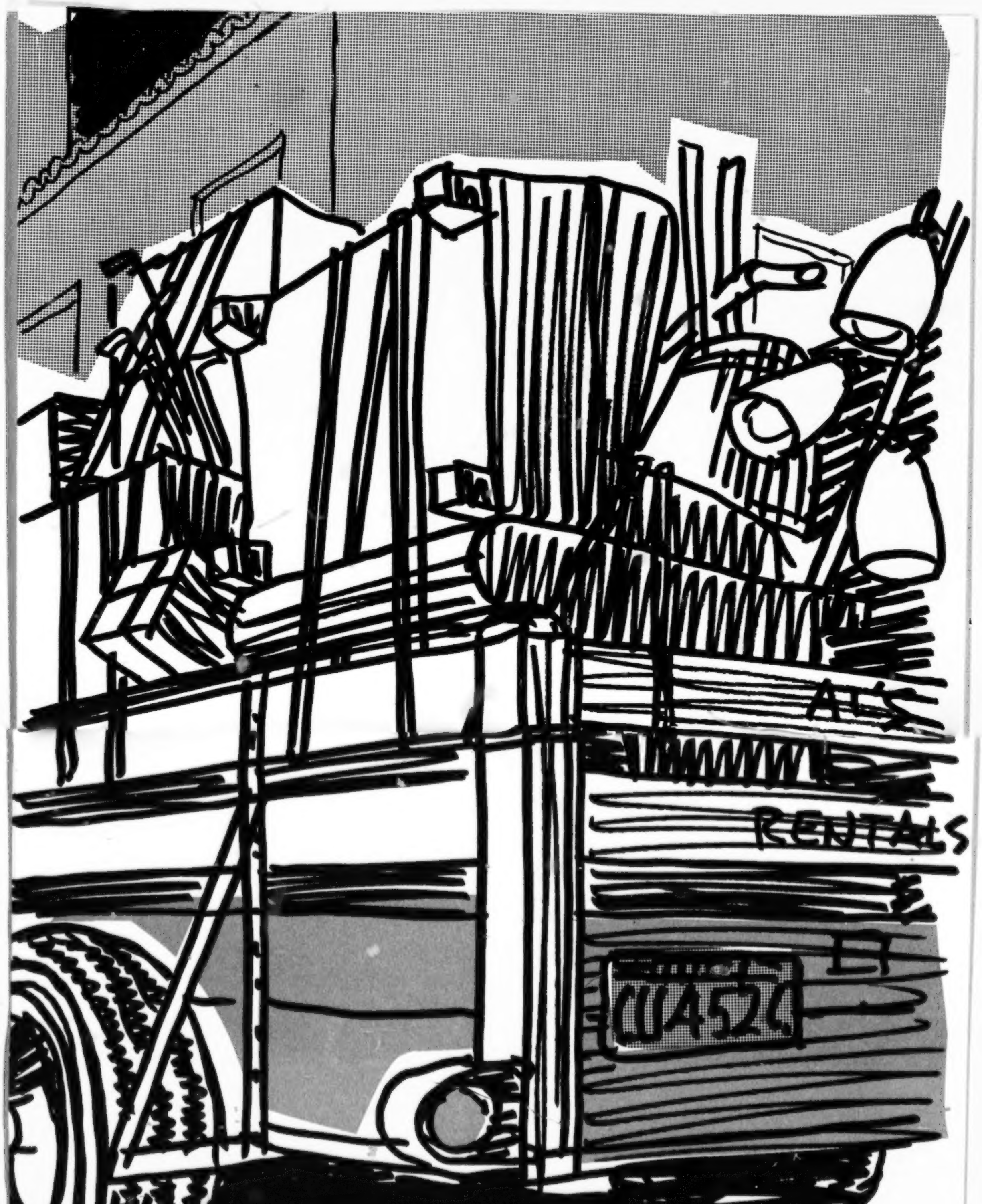
PETE WASHINGTON 205 Kathleen R. Smith
THE WISH 209 Jane Sprague
SPRING, TRAINS, BEER 217 Luis F. Hernandez
THE RACE 228 Martha W. Nightingale
I'LL TELL YOU WHY 238 Kathleen R. Smith
MONSTERS AND MUMMIES AT MIDNIGHT 243 Jane Sprague
UNHAUNTED HOUSE 254 Stan Nussbaum
THE CAR THIEF 263 Jane Sprague
CRAZY EDDIE 273 Jacqueline Ludlum
THE MYSTERY OF THE GOLDEN LOCKET 277 Jane Sprague
LEGENDARY AMERICANS 290 Robert Crumb
ROBERT SMALLS AND THE AMAZING ESCAPE 300 Jean E. Taggart
NIGHT ADVENTURE 305 Robert Crumb
THE DAY 315 Jacqueline Ludlum

TO THE PUPIL

The stories and pieces of nonfiction in this book have been written for city high school pupils. Of course, we cannot expect that you will be highly interested in *every* selection. Pupils differ too much in their likes and dislikes for that to happen. But the selections in this book have been read by classes of junior high school pupils, and most of them have said that the stories are readable, understandable, and interesting. Also, every selection is told from a young person's point of view or is told with young people firmly in mind.

We hope that you will enjoy reading this book and that you will want to talk about some of the important ideas behind the stories. We think this is important because pupils who enjoy reading and who want to talk about important ideas will become active, hopeful citizens in an ever-changing world.

NEW PEOPLE, NEW PLACES


AL'S
RENTALS
CU452

THE SHOES WITH THE THOUSAND EYES

by MORRIE GREENBERG

This play is about me. I'm Jim Novak. I am, well, sort of a loudmouth. If you want to know the truth, everybody at school calls me "Loudmouth." Sometimes they just call me "Big Mouth," or "Mouth" for short. I don't mind though. I get along pretty well with all my buddies. One thing nobody else at school knows, though. I got a brain. The trouble is that sometimes my mouth, well, it just does not listen to my brain. Do you know what I am saying? No? Well, then read this play. I wrote it and it shows just what happened to me last Friday. Then you will know what I mean when I say my mouth does not listen to my brain.

Last Friday morning as I left for school, my mother saw me with my shiny new shoes with the thousand eyes. She says, "Jim, those wing-tip shoes you bought will hurt you with such thick socks. Change your shoes or change your socks." My brain thinks, "She is right. They will kill me by Period 7. For once you are right, Mom." And my big mouth? What does it say? "Mom, quit picking on the greatest dresser in the world. I am out to show the world my new shoes with the thousand eyes." My mouth, it just does not listen to my brain. Do you have that problem?

Now read my play and see what happened to me Period 7.

CHARACTERS

NARRATOR
JIM'S MOUTH
MRS. SMEDLEY
JIM'S BRAIN
JIM'S LEFT FOOT
JIM'S RIGHT FOOT
ART
RICHARD
JIM'S EYES
JIM'S HEART
MARY
JIM'S EARS
JIM'S HANDS

NARRATOR: It is Friday afternoon. The place is Mrs. Smedley's 10th-grade math class at Prescot High. The tardy bell has not rung. Jim stomps proudly into class. He wants to be sure he is noticed. He wants to be sure everyone sees his new shoes.

JIM'S MOUTH: Good afternoon, Mrs. Smedley.

MRS. SMEDLEY: Good afternoon, Mou—er, Jim.

JIM'S BRAIN: Get to your seat and be quiet. You know you did not do the homework.

MOUTH: Say. How about calling on me today, Mrs. Smedley?

BRAIN: Oh, no! Mouth, you don't know *any* of this week's work.

MRS. SMEDLEY: Why, certainly, Jim, but did you understand last night's homework?

MOUTH: Understand it? Man, I murdered it. I got all eight problems right.

BRAIN: Oh, no! Oh, no! You big dumb mouth, you!

MRS. SMEDLEY: (In a good-natured way) Well, that's pretty good, Jim. Especially since there were only six problems.

MOUTH: Six problems? Oh, yeah. Well, I did two of them twice.

BRAIN: Oh, no. Oh, no.

MRS. SMEDLEY: All right, Jim, you better take your seat now.

MOUTH: Yes, ma'am.

JIM'S LEFT FOOT: Clump.

JIM'S RIGHT FOOT: Clump.

LEFT FOOT: Clump.

RIGHT FOOT: Clump.

ART: Hey, looka those weird shoes with the thousand eyes.

RICHARD: Man, he's flying in those shoes.

MOUTH: (To Richard) Yeah. Yeah.

JIM'S EYES: Special report! Special report!

BRAIN: Yes. Yes. What is it, Eyes?

EYES: There is Mary. She has on a sharp yellow dress. Ooo! She looks tough. Her big brown eyes are looking at you. Keep up that clump, clump, clump, with the thousand eyes shoes.

BRAIN: Hey, Eyes, I'll give the orders around here.

EYES: Yes, sir. But she does look foxie in that yellow dress. What do you think, Heart?

JIM'S HEART: Boing! Boing! Boing!

BRAIN: Ooooooo! Eeeeee! Ooooo! Eeeeee! Mary, you are tough. I am going to get you to smile at me.

LEFT FOOT: Clump.

RIGHT FOOT: Clump.

LEFT FOOT: Clump.

RIGHT FOOT: Clump.

EYES: She is giving you the eye, Jimmy. But smiling she is not.

BRAIN: Oh, Mary, you are a beauty. Say something nice as I pass her desk, Mouth.

MOUTH: (To Mary) Hello, Ugly.

BRAIN: Oh, no!

MARY: (Not really mad) Get lost, Mouth.

MOUTH: Ah, you say the sweetest words of love.

BRAIN: Oh, no. How could you, Mouth? (Jim sits down as the bell rings.)

MRS. SMEDLEY: All right, class. Today we will go over the six math homework problems we had last night. Now then, the first—

JIM'S EARS: Special request to brain. Request permission to tune out Mrs. Smedley.

BRAIN: Well, I don't know.

EARS: Oh, it's all right. You know I can always tune back in if there is an emergency. You know the teacher—

EYES: (Interrupting) Oooo! Eee! Mary is looking this way. Maybe she will smile at you.

ART: (To Jim) Hey, Mary is giving you the eye. You made a big hit clumping down the aisle with your thousand eyes shoes.

MOUTH: (Answering Art) Yeah! Yeah! She's mad for me. Mad for me, I tell you. She worships the ground my thousand eyes shoes walk on.

RICHARD: Yeah? Then why did she tell you to get lost? Why doesn't she smile at you?

BRAIN: Yeah, why doesn't she smile at me? Eyes! You keep looking at Mary. Give me a full report. Lemme know if she smiles at me. Is she smiling yet?

EYES: No, sir, she is not. It looks like she is just paying attention to the teacher.

BRAIN: What? Paying attention to the teacher? Oh, no. How square can she get?

MOUTH: Hey, Richard, did you catch my walk with—

BRAIN: (Interrupting) Mouth, shut up. Here comes a report from my feet. What is it, Feet?

LEFT FOOT: This shoe. It is killing me.

RIGHT FOOT: Me too. Yeah, you never should have worn these shoes with these thick socks.

BRAIN: Hey! Quit sounding like my old lady, or I'll put you both back in tennis shoes. Not wear the shoes with the thousand eyes? Why do you think Mary was so crazy about me today? Everybody is watchin' ol' Jimmy with his shoes. I'm gonna get Mary to smile at me.

LEFT FOOT: Well, I feel like a steamroller just used me for a blacktop.

RIGHT FOOT: I feel like the bottom olive in a can of olives.

LEFT FOOT: Ow! Ow!

RIGHT FOOT: Mercy, mercy.

BRAIN: Okay. Okay, wise guys. You, Left Foot. Take off Right Foot's shoe. You, Right Foot, do the same for your buddy.

LEFT FOOT: Clunk!

BRAIN: Hey, quiet. That sounded like a bomb.

LEFT FOOT: Ooooooh, does that feel good. Tell Mouth never to get us into this mess again.

BRAIN: Okay, Feet. I don't want to hear another peep out of you. Eyes, get back to looking at Mary. I want to know if she smiles at me.

EARS: Emergency! Emergency!

BRAIN: Don't bother me, Ears. Mary is turning around. I want to see if she will smile at me.

EARS: Emergency! Emergency! Emergency! Mayday!

BRAIN: All right, what is it? It better be a real emergency.

EARS: Mrs. Smedley. She says she will call on six students to go up to the board and do the problems.

EYES: Mrs. Smedley is writing the problems on the board.

EARS: She says for Pete to come up, and Barbara and Jimmy and—

HEART: Bing bong, bing bong.

BRAIN: Oh no! Left Foot, emergency! Help, get Right Foot's shoe on. Right Foot. Same for you. On the double.

RIGHT FOOT: Oh. Ah. Ooo. Ouch!

LEFT FOOT: Ach. Ooo. Eee. Ouch!

BRAIN: Hands, tie the laces. Fast.

JIM'S HANDS: Yes, sir. Right away, sir.

BRAIN: (To Mouth) I should murder you for telling the teacher you knew the work.

BRAIN: (To Feet) Okay, up the aisle to the board. Hurry up.

LEFT FOOT: Oh, no. Ouch! Mouth, you are the cause of all our troubles.

RIGHT FOOT: Clump.

LEFT FOOT: Clump.

RIGHT FOOT: Clump.

LEFT FOOT: Clump.

BRAIN: Get a load of Mary, the beautiful fox, when we go by.

MOUTH: (To Mary) Hello, Big Ugly Brown Eyes. Your face looks like an old pizza pie.

BRAIN: Oh, no. Oh, no.

EYES: **SPECIAL REPORT! SPECIAL REPORT!** Mary just looked at you — at your shoes with the thousand eyes — and she is giving you a **BIG SMILE.** Repeat: **A BIG SMILE.**

BRAIN: **OOOOOOO. EEEEEE.** We made it! We made it!!

HEART: Boing! Boing! Boing! Boin—

MRS. SMEDLEY: (Interrupting Heart) All right, Jim, the fourth problem is yours!

MOUTH: Gee, Mrs. Smedley, I know all of them except for number four. Can I get back to my seat?

MRS. SMEDLEY: Yes, Jim, I think you'd better.

LEFT FOOT: Clump.

RIGHT FOOT: Clump.

LEFT FOOT: Clump.

RIGHT FOOT: Clump.

EYES: Mary! She's given you the eye and smiling even more.

BRAIN: Ooooo. Eeeee. Ooooeeee.

HEART: Boing, Boing, Boing . . .

MOUTH: (To Richard) Hey, didja catch the big smile Brown Eyes just gave me? I tell you, I got what it takes.

RICHARD: Well, who wouldn't smile. Take a look at your shoes, dope.

EYES: Oh, no! Brain, I haven't got the heart to tell you.

BRAIN: What? What?

EYES: The right foot — it has on the left shoe. And the left foot — it has on —

BRAIN: I know. I know. It has on the right shoe. Oh, no. So that is why she gave me the big smile. Oh, cruel world. When will my mouth learn to keep quiet?

MOUTH: (To Richard) Yeah, yeah, I knew it all the time. I just did it for laughs. Who cares about Mary, anyway? Not me.

IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE HAIRDO

by JANE SPRAGUE

Ever since I got over being a child, I have been more interested in my hairdo. All last year in seventh grade, I kept watching all the different ways the girls do their hair at my school.

This year, I've been experimenting myself. I have three ways I like to wear my hair. Each way goes with a different mood.

The only problem is, my friends don't seem to catch on to this. How can they be so stupid? It seems simple enough to me.

For example, there's the up-do. Now with my hair up, I feel more cool. I don't mean cool around the neck. I mean cool in my mind. I wear that up-do with my blue sheath dress. With white shoes I look pretty neat.

I have certain words to use with that look, too. I say, "Really?" And I say, "My, my," or "Do tell." I make it sound like I don't believe you when I use those words. It makes boys so MAD!

Like the other day, Larry says, "My brother's got a new car, a Lincoln Continental! Man, is that a keen car!"

I know Larry is telling the truth because I saw it parked in front of his house yesterday. But I play it the cool way. I say, real slow, "My, my. Do tell."

Larry gets so mad! He says, "Well, he *did* get it. A Lincoln Continental! I'll show it to you after school."

I love the way he squeezes up his face when he gets mad. So I say, "Really?" And then I walk away and leave him standing there. He is so mad he is almost steaming. Very funny.

When one of the teachers asks me to do something dirty like carry dusty old books to the bookroom, I say that I haven't finished my work yet. I don't do anything like that when my hair is up. It just wouldn't fit.

But when I wear my hair pulled back in a ponytail, I am quite different. I wear my pleated skirt and a blouse that has a ribbon at the neck. It always matches the ribbon on my hair.

I use special words for the ponytail hairdo. I am very un-cool this time. I'm a go-go girl, saying, "Neat! Keen! Sharp!" about anything and everything.

Larry hasn't spoken to me since I didn't believe his brother had a Lincoln Continental. So I make it up with him two days later, wearing the ponytail.

"Hi, Larry."

"Hi."

"That's a keen shirt you've got on, Larry."

"This? It's old."

"But it looks *sharp*. How's your brother like his Lincoln?"

"It's okay." (Larry doesn't trust me yet.) "Did you see it?"

"Sure. It's neat. I mean it's really keen, you know?"

Larry is hooked again. He comes to life. "Boy, it's the coolest car you ever saw. Maybe I can get him to let you ride in it, okay?"

In school, on ponytail days, I'm a regular girl Friday. You know, that's what they call those secretaries who almost run the whole office for the boss. I play girl Friday to the teachers like mad. I mark papers, erase boards, run errands — all that stuff.

Teachers really dig me when I wear my ponytail.

But when my hair is down, watch out. I wear it down when it rains — tears or plain water — it doesn't matter what kind of rain. I just let it hang down. My mood hangs down, too.

I wear my narrow black skirt and a loose sweater with some 1920-type beads hanging down in a long string. Black stockings and shoes finish off the outfit.

I have droopy words for that down-do. I say, with a sort of I-give-up tone of voice, "Who needs it?" Or, "So *what*?" And, "That's for the birds."

Larry comes bouncing along the last time I'm wearing the down hairdo.

"Hi, wanta ride in my brother's car tonight? He's going to take us down to the beach!"

I just look at him coldly and say, "Who needs it?"

Larry's face turns from happy to unhappy. "What do you mean, 'Who needs it?' I thought you liked his car. Yesterday you said it was keen."

He's got a worried look now. "That was yesterday," I say.

"Well, it's the same car today."

"So what?" I comb my hair and act as if Larry isn't even there.

"Oh, *girls!* You make me so mad. Who needs you?" He turns and walks off, kicking everything loose that he comes to, all the way down the street.

On the days when my hair is down, teachers ask for help, but they don't get much. I take three times as long as I need to when I run the first errand. Then they let me sit down the rest of the time. They think they are making me feel bad because they don't trust me anymore. When my hair is down, people are for the *birds*. All people. Even me.

So you see, I have a new me for every hair style I wear. It's sort of like being three different girls, with clothes and words and moods to match.

It isn't hard to figure out which is which. It all depends on the hairdo.

THE TWO-PARTY DRESS

by KATHLEEN R. SMITH

Tina was walking to school with her brother Bill, when Lee Ann called, "Wait for me!"

"I won't walk with *her*," Bill said. "I'll go ahead."

Bill was a class ahead of Tina in high school. He liked his sister, but he didn't like to walk to school with her. Today he knew Tina felt sad about not getting a dress for the prom. So he walked with her. He would not walk with Lee Ann.

Not many kids liked Lee Ann. Some were afraid of her. Lee Ann knew everything that went on in school. Bill said Lee Ann's tongue was as sharp as a knife.

"Tina," Lee Ann said, "I heard that Bob Wills asked you to his school prom."

"Yes, he did," said Tina.

"You met him at the youth center dance, didn't you? He knows your brother, Bill, doesn't he? What school does he go to?"

"He goes to Van Buren," said Tina.

"Have you got a dress for the prom?" asked Lee Ann.

"No-no, I haven't," said Tina.

"Why not? The dance is on Friday. Oh-oh, I'll bet you can't get one!" Lee Ann laughed and ran ahead.

Lee Ann was right. Tina did not have a prom dress. Tonight she would tell Bob Wills that she couldn't go with him.

Tina's brother Bill came up to her in school. "Tina, what did Lee Ann say to you?" he asked.

"She bet I can't get a dress for the prom."

"We've got to fix it so Lee Ann is wrong," Bill said. "We'll think of something."

"We can't. You know how mad Mom was when I told her I needed a dress," Tina said.

"She wasn't mad at all," Bill said. "She just feels bad when the money goes for rent and food and nothing left."

"Taking care of four kids and Grandma takes a lot of money," Tina said.

"I get paid Friday," said Bill. "Maybe I can give you some."

"You can't," Tina said. "Mom needs it to help with the rent."

Tina did not eat lunch with the other girls. She sat alone, trying to think how to get a dress for the prom.

"Tina, you look as bad as I feel," said Janelle, coming to sit by her.

"Why do *you* feel bad?" asked Tina.

"You know that Lee Ann? She knew Jim was going to ask me to the prom. She went and told him I was going with Len."

"Tell Jim that you aren't going with Len," said Tina.

"It's too late. He asked Darlene to go with him. And I even went out and got a dress."

"That's bad, Janelle," said Tina. "We are both out of luck. I have a date and no dress."

"What date?" asked Janelle.

Tina told her about Bob Wills.

"Now I have to tell him I can't go," she said.

"Oh, no!" said Janelle.

They sat thinking. Then Janelle clapped her hands.

"Tina, we can't let Lee Ann win all the time. You wear my dress. It will fit you."

"Oh," said Tina, "thank you, Janelle."

"You will love the dress," said Janelle. "You'll *love* it. It's a long, white dress with green and pink flowers on it and a wide, green sash, and a narrow skirt."

"Oh, Janelle," Tina said, "I don't want to go to the prom in your dress and you having to stay home."

"Thanks to Lee Ann, that's what I'll be doing," said Janelle.

Tina called to her brother, Bill. She told him what Janelle said.

"Why can't you both wear the dress?" asked Bill.

"How?" asked Tina.

"How?" asked Janelle.

"The proms are not on the same night. They are not at the same school," said Bill. "Tina goes with Bob Wills and wears the dress one night. Janelle wears the dress the next night and goes with me."

"You!" said Tina and Janelle.

"Why not? Will you go with me, Janelle?"

"Oh, yes!" said Janelle.

The bell rang. As they went back to class, Lee Ann came up.

"Too bad you girls aren't going to the prom," she said.

"But we are," said Janelle.

"Who are you going with? I know Jim asked Darlene."

"And Bill asked me," said Janelle.

"Tina, you don't have a dress. You can't go," Lee Ann said.

"I do have a dress," said Tina.

"Where did you get it? What kind of dress is it?" asked Lee Ann.

"It is a kind of two-party dress," Tina said, smiling at Janelle.

NOBODY'S GONNA TALK 'BOUT *ME*!

by JANE SPRAGUE

Toni stood in a little knot of girls on one side of the school lunch area.

"Are you gonna take that, Toni?"

" 'Course she's not. Toni will fight her."

"She'll whip her head, she will."

Toni stood there listening to her friends. She looked over their heads to see another knot of girls about thirty feet away. She could see her enemy, Delia, staring hard at her.

Paula, a thin grasshopper of a girl, spoke to Toni.

"And she talked about your mother, too!"

A stir of anger went through the group.

"What did she say, Paula?"

"Never mind what she said. I've heard enough. Let's go." Toni started to move toward Delia's group.

Mrs. Newton, a small, middle-aged teacher, came between the groups. She didn't understand what was happening. The girls knew that.

"What's the matter, girls? Is anything wrong?"

"No, Mrs. Newton," Paula said. Her voice was icky sweet and fake. Somebody laughed. "We're just playin'. Everythin' is jus' fine." Paula smiled and the rest of the girls smiled, too.

Mrs. Newton looked at the other group. Delia smiled a fake smile.

"Oh, I see. All right, then." Mrs. Newton walked away, checked her watch, and left the grounds. Her noon-duty time was over.

"She wouldn't see trouble if it walked up and hit her in the eye," somebody in Toni's group said. "Miss Finch will be here in a minute though. She sees everything. We better cool it until the bell rings." Toni looked at Delia.

Without talking it over, Delia and her group got the message. The two groups separated and moved to opposite areas in the yard.

Miss Finch sensed the tension in the air. She walked to each group, saw who was there, smiled and spoke. Nobody fooled her with fake smiles and "we're just playin'." Nobody even tried.

Just when it looked as if Miss Finch had everything all figured out, a kid came out of the main building. He took a note to Miss Finch. She read the note, checked her watch, and went inside with the boy.

"Probably got a phone call or something," Toni said.

The loud bell rang for classes to begin again. Kids began to move at once, breaking up groups, going quickly or slowly to various buildings.

Delia's group waited near the walk that led to the girls' room in the main building.

Toni led her friends in twos and threes toward the same walk.

By the time most of the yard was cleared, the two groups had moved into the girls' room.

The two leaders stood close to each other. Toni was larger, but Delia had a sharper, colder look in her eyes.

"Who do you think you are, talking about me?" Toni began.

"You talked about me first!" Delia was mad.

"You lie!"

"Don't call me a liar, you dirty rat!" Delia took a step forward.

Toni reached out with both hands and shoved Delia. All the girls crowded in a circle around them.

Suddenly the two angry girls were slapping faces and tearing hair. The rest were cheering them on.

Delia got hold of Toni's hair and pulled her down until Toni lost her balance and fell to the white tile floor. Toni grapped Delia around the legs, and she fell. Toni rolled over and sat on Delia, slapping her face, first one side and then the other as hard as she could.

The door pushed open. Two teachers and the Girls' Vice-Principal came in. In a few minutes all names had been taken, and everybody was sent to class except Toni and Delia.

While the names were being taken, Delia and Toni stood glaring at each other. Delia had a couple of scratches on her arm, her upper lip was swollen, and one eye was beginning to swell up.

Toni had a long scratch on her face, and there were two handfuls of torn hair lying on her shoulders.

"Fix yourselves up right here, girls. Then we'll have the nurse put something on those scratches. After that we'll talk about this in my office," Mrs. Grant said.

"We'll see that they get there," Miss Finch said. She and the other teacher waited until the girls were calmed down. Then the nurse saw their scratches.

When the two girls were finally in the Vice-Principal's office, the other teacher left. Miss Finch sat down.

"What started this?" Mrs. Grant took up her pen to take notes.

"Toni started it," Delia said. She began to cry a little bit.

"Mrs. Grant, I *didn't* start it. Delia was talking about me. And nobody's gonna talk about me!"

"What was she saying about you, Toni?" Miss Finch asked.

Toni tried to think. "Well, I don't know exactly. My friends told me she was saying bad things about my mother. And I'm not gonna stand for anybody doing that." Toni sobbed and glared at Delia.

"Which friends told you that, Toni?" Mrs. Grant said. Delia spoke out. She was madder than ever.

"Well, my friends told me Toni was talking about *me* and *my* family, Mrs. Grant. Toni started it, not me."

"Can you tell me which of *your* friends, Delia, told you those things about Toni?"

"No, I'm not gonna fink on somebody," Delia said.

"I'm not either," Toni said, folding her arms and staring out the window.

For half an hour or more, Mrs. Grant asked all kinds of questions without getting very many answers.

Toni believed Delia had talked about her, and Delia believed the same about Toni.

At last Delia said, "I *know* Toni started it."

"How do you know? Tell me about it," Mrs. Grant said.

"Well, because when Paula came and . . ."

"Paula? Paula who?" Mrs. Grant knew this was important.

"Paula Wilson."

"Paula Wilson! She's not *your* friend; she's *my* friend," Toni said. "She's the one who said you were talking about me."

Delia's eyes opened wide. "She did? But she told me the same thing about you!"

Miss Finch leaned forward in her chair. "Well, girls, would you two be willing to swear that neither one of you said anything bad about the other?"

"Sure I would, Miss Finch," Toni said firmly.

"I would, too," said Delia.

"Then somebody lied to both of you and made you fight," Mrs. Grant said quietly.

"Paula Wilson!" Toni and Delia said together. It was funny the way it sounded. They couldn't help smiling at each other.

"Looks like we've both been had, sort of," Toni said. "That Paula. I'd like to fix her good."

"So would I," Delia said, blowing her nose.

"Not so fast. Was it really *Paula's* fault?" Mrs. Grant spoke softly.

Toni was quick to answer that. "Sure it was. She made up stuff and Delia trusted her. I did, too. Sure it's Paula's fault, the little fink!" Toni twisted the Kleenex in her hand until it tore in two pieces.

Mrs. Grant turned to Delia. "Why did *you* trust Paula?"

Delia took a deep breath. "I thought she was my friend. You have to trust your friends, don't you?"

"Wasn't Toni your friend, too?" Mrs. Grant asked.

"Well, I didn't know Toni very well," Delia said.

"But you didn't have any reason to want to fight me," Toni said. "I never did anything to you."

Delia nodded. "I know. But I believed Paula."

Mrs. Grant said, "And, Toni, you believed Paula, too. Did you have any reason to fight Delia, except for what Paula said?"

"No, I didn't."

"Then what *could* you have done to avoid this mess?"

Both the girls said nothing. They sat, their elbows resting on the arms of their wooden chairs, their feet swinging. They stared at their feet.

Finally, Toni raised her head. "We could have checked with each other, privately, without the girls around, I guess."

"How simple that would have been. Now Toni has a scratch on her face that will probably leave a scar. And you, Delia, have scratches on your arm that may do the same thing."

Mrs. Grant leaned forward. "Also, because you were fighting you will be suspended from school until both your mothers can come in. All because one girl wanted to see a fight. And because you were willing to believe rumors without checking facts."

Delia moved uncomfortably in her chair. She looked at Toni and then at Mrs. Grant. "Well, Paula's usually right about things," Delia said.

"Yeah, that's what I thought, too," Toni said.

"Well, I'll be talking to Paula, and she will be suspended, too. But her talk would never have worked if you two hadn't been ready to believe it. Isn't that right, Toni?"

Toni looked down at her feet. "I suppose so."

Mrs. Grant and Miss Finch stood up. Mrs. Grant picked up some notes from her desk.

She spoke to the girls quietly. "Now, you two may wait in the outer office while I have a secretary type up your letters to take home."

Toni and Delia moved out into the waiting room, and Miss Finch left the office.

Toni looked at Delia. "Well, I guess we really goofed this time."

Delia nodded. "I guess so. A couple of stupid chumps, that's what we are."

They sat there in silence for a few minutes. Then Toni nodded her head toward the office. "We couldn't let them know it in there, though. They'd think we were a couple of flunkies or something."

"Yeah. We can't let them think that. Say, you fight pretty good, Toni. Maybe we'd better be friends."

"Yeah, maybe. You were pretty good, too, Delia. It would be easier if you are on my side. You're too dangerous to be an enemy," Toni said.

Both of the girls smiled a little.

OUT OF GAS

by KATHLEEN R. SMITH

Lennie was coming home from work when he saw Mr. Barlow. At first he didn't know it was Mr. Barlow. He just saw a man having trouble with his car — trouble that he couldn't handle.

Lennie had to laugh. The man had the hood up and was poking around, jabbing here and there.

"He's not going *anywhere*," Lennie thought.

When the man raised his head, Lennie could see it was Mr. Barlow. When Lennie was in high school Mr. Barlow had been his history teacher. Mr. Barlow had seemed to know a lot about history, but he didn't know anything about cars.

At first Lennie was going to pass right by him, but Mr. Barlow got into the car and turned on the ignition. The noise decided Lennie. He loved cars, and that was no way to treat a car. A Mustang shouldn't be treated that way.

"Got troubles, Mr. Barlow?" he asked.

Mr. Barlow leaned his head out of the window, took off his glasses, and wiped them.

"Don't I know you?" he asked, peering at Lennie

"Yeah. Lennie Johnson. I was in your history class."

"Lennie Johnson. Let me see, you dropped out of school, didn't you?"

"Yeah." Lennie didn't want to talk about that.

He didn't want to say he hadn't liked school. He hadn't liked the kids, and he hadn't liked the teachers. Most of all, he hadn't liked the teachers. The teachers liked the smart kids who lived in nice houses, and whose fathers had good jobs. They didn't care about Lennie Johnson whose father was dead, who lived in a crowded apartment with his mother and five kids.

Teachers hadn't taught Lennie much — not enough to fill out an application getting the spelling right, not enough to pass the test to get the job he wanted with Auto Supply Company.

"What are you doing now, Lennie?" Mr. Barlow asked.

"Busboy in a restaurant," Lennie muttered.

"Like it?"

"No, I don't like it," Lennie's voice was bitter. "It's a nowhere job."

Mr. Barlow had forgotten about the car. Maybe he hadn't taught Lennie any history, but he was a teacher.

"What do you want to do, Lennie?"

Lennie heard the interest in Mr. Barlow's voice. He looked away.

"I don't know," he muttered.

"Come, come, Lennie, you must have some idea," said Mr. Barlow, every inch a teacher now.

Lennie felt like he was back in school. He almost expected Mr. Barlow to say next, "If you had read the chapter you would know the answer."

Lennie did just as he had done in school. He stared vacantly into space and shrugged his shoulders. Mr. Barlow sighed and turned on the ignition again. The car shook.

"Hey, stop that!" Lennie reached in and turned off the ignition.

He raised the hood. Mr. Barlow shook his head.

"It's hopeless. I'll have to call the garage. It was working all right this morning, but on my way home it started to shake and rattle. I think I've got real trouble there."

All the while he was talking, Lennie was bent over the car. At last he straightened up and looked at Mr. Barlow.

"Now start it again."

Mr. Barlow turned on the key. The motor purred gently.

"Why — why that's a miracle!" Mr. Barlow cried. "What did you do to it Lennie?"

Lennie tried not to laugh, but he couldn't help it. Mr. Barlow, a teacher who had gone to college, didn't know any more than a baby about cars.

"Spark plug wires were loose," he explained, still laughing.

After a moment, Mr. Barlow laughed, too. He took off his glasses and wiped them.

"I guess you can see I don't know much about cars. Lucky for me that you do. Why don't you jump in and let me give you a lift?"

Lennie got in.

"Mind if I stop at the school first? I have to pick up some papers."

They talked about cars. Lennie found himself telling Mr. Barlow that the only class he had liked in high school was auto shop. Somehow he hadn't learned to read very well, or spell, but he did know cars. He told Mr. Barlow about the auto supply business where a guy could work up if he did well. He showed him the application he hadn't filled out. He told about his fear of taking the test the company required.

When they reached the school, they went to Mr. Barlow's classroom. Seated behind his desk, Mr. Barlow asked Lennie a lot of questions.

"What do you know about the auto supply business? What is the pay scale? What do they require? And finally, are you willing to work to be able to get the job?"

"Yes," he said.

Mr. Barlow went to the blackboard and took a piece of chalk.

"As I see your problem, Lennie," he said, writing quickly, "number one, you need a high school diploma to get the job."

Lennie saw the blackboard covered as Mr. Barlow wrote:

(1) high school diploma
(2) pass the test
(3) fill out the application correctly

"I can help on number three." Mr. Barlow drew a line through number three. "Also on number two, I have sample copies of such tests, and we can work on them. Number one is going to be up to you. Lennie, you can go back to school nights and Saturdays and get that diploma." He paused.

"Maybe it would help if I called the company and told them you are working on your high school credits," Mr. Barlow said.

Lennie tried to speak, but the words didn't come. He could only nod his head.

"That's enough for today," said Mr. Barlow, erasing the blackboard. "I'll drive you home."

The car purred smoothly into motion. At the end of the parking lot it stopped.

"*Now*, what's wrong?" yelled Mr. Barlow.

Lennie leaned over and looked. He tried not to laugh again, but he couldn't make it.

"You're out of gas, Mr. Barlow," said Lennie Johnson.

LOVE, DOLORES

by JACQUELINE LUDLUM

Richard was mad. No one was going to take his girl and get away with it.

He had taken the note from Dolores. He was sure it was for him. When he read it he knew it was for Johnny. He could not believe it. No wonder Dolores was afraid to let him see it. As he read it again he got red in the face and felt his hands get wet and hot.

> Dearest Johnny,
>
> You are invited to a party at my house on Saturday night at 7:30. All the kids will be there. Razor said I should ask you to come. Please say yes.
>
> Love,
> Dolores.

Why that . . . . He tried to think of a name bad enough. She was his girl. She wore his jacket all last week. He walked her home each night and gave up football practice for her.

As he stood in the hall outside the room he knew why Mrs. Felson sent him out. He had grabbed his jacket from the back of Dolores's desk and yelled something awful at her. He didn't care. He read the note again and got mad all over.

Mrs. Felson came outside.

"Richard, what an awful thing to say to Dolores. Don't you think you should say you are sorry to her, to me, and to the class?"

Richard just stood there feeling his eyes burn and his fists turn hard. He would settle this in his own way. Dolores had told him that he was the only boy for her. She said she felt warm and safe as she wore his jacket. He remembered when she let him kiss her that first time at the park. How could she invite Johnny to the party? How could she . . . ?

Mrs. Felson talked some more, but Richard wasn't listening. At last she looked at him in a funny way and went back into the room. He just stood there and he hurt all over. Why did it hurt so?

"Felson is a good old gal," he said to himself as he went to the lunch area. She said something about telling the vice-principal, but let him go. As he stood in the hash-line he tried to forget about Dolores, but he found she was always on his mind. He looked toward the auditorium and saw her sitting at a table by the fence with a girl friend.

"I bet she is talking about me," he said to himself, and that made him feel better.

Just then Razor came around the Cafeteria with Johnny. They headed right for him.

"Hey, Big Shot, you want to start a thing?" Johnny was talking to him and he noticed for the first time how much bigger he was.

"Get out of here, or you'll be wearing a bad eye." Richard was not afraid of Johnny or Razor or any of their gang, and so he said it loud and clear.

Just then the vice-principal came around the corner of the building. He walked over to them, and the two boys took off the other way.

"Richard, eat your lunch and then come to my office," Mr. Monroe said to him. He was hopping mad, and the cold way he talked to him made Richard take back what he said about good old Felson.

He started towards the table by the fence. Dolores looked up at him and then looked away.

"Why did you write that note to Johnny?" said Richard. He didn't want to sound mad, but he knew that it came out that way.

"You only talk about football. You can't dance. You aren't any fun. Besides, Johnny is tough. Know what I mean? I don't want to go steady with you any more. I just don't want you around." She really told him off.

Richard had to get away from her because she made him feel like a creep. All of a sudden he was sick and felt a pain in his gut. The sandwich in his hand weighed a ton. Something must be in his eye because he couldn't see the bench where he was going to sit down.

On the way to Mr. Monroe's office he saw Johnny with Dolores. They were laughing and having a ball as they sat near the Auditorium.

The chair in front of Mr. Monroe's desk was hard. Richard tried to listen, but all he could think of was Dolores and what she said to him. He was tough, too, and he would prove it to her. He would . . . he would.

It was 4 o'clock before detention was finally over. On the way home he went by Dolores's house. He had to see her. Johnny was on the porch with her. They were still laughing. They spotted him across the street.

"Hi, Lover-boy," Johnny said.

Before he knew what he was doing, he was across the street and standing in front of Johnny. His fists were ready.

"Say it once more, once more, punk!" Richard was not sure the words were coming from him, but he was sure that he was now five feet taller than Johnny.

"Okay, Chicken, throw a right." Johnny had his fists ready, too. Johnny now had a look in his eyes that made Richard feel smaller all of a sudden. Dolores just stood there. She had a little smile on her face.

In a quiet voice she said, "Get him, Johnny. He's a creep."

Richard didn't know how it happened, but he was on the ground looking up at Johnny. His eyes wouldn't stop going round and round. It felt funny. Then he knew they were laughing at him. His head stopped hurting, and his eyes zeroed in on Johnny. With a great jump he was at Johnny. Richard seemed to know what to do. He hit and pounded. Then his fists found the soft nose of this ugly guy. "Johnny, you're going to get it now," he heard himself say.

It was over almost before he knew it. Johnny was on the grass, and the blood was running out of his nose. He did not seem to move. For a minute Johnny just lay there.

Dolores came running down the steps and threw her arms around his neck.

"Richard, Richard, you are the greatest! He's a punk all right. Want to come to the party Saturday night?"

He stood there looking first at Johnny, who did not move, and at Dolores, who seemed to enjoy the blood on both of them. Without knowing why, he dropped down beside Johnny and said, "You all right?" Richard grabbed the hose and turned it on and tried to help his fallen enemy.

Johnny began to move a little. Richard used his hand to pat the water on Johnny's head. He used the torn part of his shirt to stop the bloody nose.

Dolores stood there. Finally she ran up the stairs. She turned and yelled back at them. "Get out of here. You're both creeps."

Richard helped Johnny to his feet. They looked at each other. Richard put out his hand, and Johnny shook it slowly. Both boys were smiling as they headed towards the street.

I'M JUST ME

by JOHN DURHAM

Arnie was scared. He had never been so scared. He looked from one cop to the other.

"Man, there's a ton of stuff in that closet," the Negro cop said. He pointed his thumb over his shoulder toward Arnie's room. "He must have been lifting stuff for a year. You wouldn't believe it."

The other cop, the white one, stared at Arnie. The cop's blue eyes were wide in his tanned face. "You don't look hardly big enough to cart off a box of crackers," he said.

Arnie's hands trembled on the faded arms of the big chair. His stomach hurt. His mouth was so dry he couldn't spit. But he wasn't going to let a white cop put him down.

"If I ain't big enough," he said, "how come you're here?"

"He's a tough one," the white cop said. He laughed. "How old are you?"

"Ten," Arnie said. That was a lie. He was eight. But he didn't want to be put down by anybody. Not a white cop and not a Negro one. Or anybody else, for that matter.

"You're not ten," the white cop said. "You look about six."

"He's eight," the Negro cop said. "Boy, you are in trouble. You know that?"

"Sure, I know that. You think I'm dumb?"

"Dumb enough to steal," the Negro cop said. "And dumb enough to get caught stealing. How come you took all that stuff?"

"Who said I stole it?"

Both cops laughed. "Where's your mama?" the Negro cop said.

"I ain't got no mama."

"Okay, where's your daddy?"

"I ain't got no daddy."

"Whose house is this?" The Negro cop looked around. It was a shabby place. Even Arnie could see that. Especially Arnie. He hated this trashy-looking place and every place he had ever lived, since his mama had died.

"The lady I live with, her name is Mrs. McDermott. She's the foster lady."

"Where is she?"

"Work."

The Negro cop looked at the white cop. Then he looked back at Arnie. "Does she know that closet is full of all that stuff?"

"She doesn't know nothin'. She ain't ever here. And when she's here she don't pay me no mind."

"How come you took three bottles of stomach medicine?" the Negro cop said. "I can see why you might take twenty packages of golf balls. But I don't understand the three bottles of stomach medicine."

Arnie just looked at him. He didn't know why he took the stomach medicine. He didn't know why he took the golf balls. Or the three cameras. Or the fifty-five light bulbs. Or the can of cinnamon. He didn't know why he took the hammer, or the beach towel, or the five pairs of sunglasses. He didn't know why he took eight bottles of fingernail polish and a hair dryer. He did know why he took the candy bars, all 158 of them. He took them to eat. But he didn't know why he unwrapped them so carefully. He didn't know why he had saved 158 candy wrappers. All 158 wrappers were still here, in the closet. Mars Bars, Baby Ruths, U-Nos, Hersheys. All the wrappers were still there.

"Don't you know it's a bad thing to steal?" the Negro cop said. He stood there looking at Arnie, shaking his head.

"How come it's so bad?" Arnie said.

"Because you got to work for what you get."

"The white lady Mrs. McDermott works for. She don't work for what she gets. She just sets on her rear, Mrs. McDermott say. And she got a Lincoln car. She got a big house. She got two closets full of dresses. How come she don't have to work?"

"She's smart," the white cop said. He laughed.

"She's an ofay, that's why," Arnie said.

"Now you cut that out," the Negro cop said. "Jim here is all right. He's white and he's a cop. But he's not an ofay."

"He look like one to me," Arnie said. "*You* look like one. You look like an ofay. All you need is blue eyes."

"He's a hard one," the white cop said. "My, my. Don't pull a gun on us, boy."

"Would if I had one," Arnie said.

"You think we better put the cuffs on him?" the white cop said. He laughed and hitched up his gun belt.

"Aw, naw," the Negro cop said. "He'll come along all right. He's jokin' about the cuffs," he said to Arnie.

"I know he is jokin'," Arnie said. "Do I look dumb?"

"How come you got to be a cop?" Arnie said to the Negro cop. "How come you didn't go into some kind of honest work?"

Both cops laughed. "I'm glad he doesn't have a gun," the white cop said. "He really knows how to hurt a guy."

Arnie didn't know why he started crying as they went out the door. Outside, the police car sat at the curb. Arnie didn't know why he was crying.

The social worker lady was the same one Arnie had seen before. Miss Schultz. She was blonde and kind of fat and her upper lip was always sweaty. She talked with a little lisp. Not much of a lisp. Just a little one. Arnie thought she was kind of dumb. She sat in the chair next to his bed in Juvenile Hall. Arnie sat on the bed. He listened to the boys outside on the playground yelling back and forth. He didn't want to listen to Miss Schultz.

"I talked to a doctor about you," Miss Schultz said. "Doctor Wilson. I told him how you said you got started taking the stuff. I told him about the kind of stuff you took."

Arnie looked at her for the first time. For the first time he was interested in what she said. "A doctor?" he said. "What's a doctor got to do with stealin'?"

"It's a special kind of doctor."

"What kind?" Arnie said.

"A doctor," Miss Schultz said, "who knows why people do the things they do."

"Why they do bad things?"

"Well, yes, I suppose. But why they do any kind of thing."

"A headshrinker, you mean? That kind of doctor? Is that the kind of doctor you asked about me?"

"A psychiatrist, " Miss Schultz said. "I wanted to know why you'd take things you'd never need."

"I ain't crazy," Arnie said. "I don't need no headshrinker to tell me why I stole them things."

"Why did you, then?"

"So I could sell 'em and get money," Arnie said. He knew that wasn't the reason. He didn't know why he had taken the stuff. But he knew that sounded right. People stole things to make money. He knew about that. "They gonna keep me here?" he said. "In Juvenile Hall?"

"I don't know," Miss Schultz said. "The judge will have to say."

"That doctor," Arnie said, "did he say why I took all that stuff? Why I stole it?"

"Do you know what kleptomania is?"

"Klepto what?"

"Kleptomania. Sometimes people need something. And they don't know what they need. Maybe they need somebody to love them. You see? And they'll steal things."

"That don't make sense," Arnie said. "I stole that stuff to make money."

"Well, anyway," Miss Schultz said. "Just listen a minute. A person doesn't have enough love, right? And so he takes things. He knows he's going to get caught. And when he gets caught people notice him. Do you see? People notice him, and it's almost like they loved him. Do you understand?"

Arnie laughed. "Them cops, I don't think they loved me much."

"But they paid some attention to you. Don't you see?"

"They paid enough attention to bring me down to Juvy Hall. I see that." Arnie listened to the boys playing ball out on the playground. "They gonna keep me here, you think?"

"We'll just have to see what the judge says."

The court wasn't like courts in movies and cartoons. There was just a desk for the judge to sit behind. There were eight chairs and two pictures on the wall. There was an American flag and a California flag. Arnie was disappointed, somehow. He thought a court should be more impressive. And he thought the judge should at least be a man. The judge was a woman, a Negro woman, and she wore just a dress, instead of black robes. She was a Negro woman and she had a low, sweet voice.

Besides the judge there was Miss Schultz and a man who turned out to be the doctor, and Arnie. Then there were a man and a woman, Negroes, who sat off in the corner just listening. They listened while Miss Schultz told about Arnie's life. His mother had died in an automobile accident, Miss Schultz said. Then Arnie had lived in four foster homes before he went to live with Mrs. McDermott. He left one foster home because he couldn't stop wetting the bed. He left another one because he kept digging up the flowers. He left the third place because he kept biting the foster mother's real son. And now there was the stealing.

The judge listened while the doctor talked. Doctor Wilson said pretty much what Miss Schultz had told Arnie. He said that Arnie needed love. He said Arnie had become a kleptomaniac to get attention.

"Thank you, Doctor," the judge said. "That's very interesting. Now, young man." She turned to look at Arnie. His stomach fluttered. "What do you think about all this?"

"I don't know," Arnie said. "Well," he said, "I know one thing."

"What's that?" the judge said.

"Somebody's always sayin' I'm some kind of thing," Arnie said.

"What do you mean?" the judge looked interested.

"I mean, somebody called me a bedwetter. And somebody else called me a biter. And somebody called me a flower-digger. I heard the teacher at school say to another teacher, 'He's a disturbed child'."

"Yes," the judge said.

"And I wasn't none of them things," Arnie said. "And now this doctor here, he say I'm a klepto-what-do-you-call-it."

"Kleptomaniac," the judge said helpfully.

"And I ain't that, either," Arnie said. He was beginning to get stirred up. He was beginning to get mad. "I ain't no kind of maniac. I'm just me."

The judge laughed, and so did the doctor and Miss Schultz. The man and woman over in the corner just smiled. "Well, I ain't," Arnie shouted. "I'm me."

"You know what I'd say you are?" the judge said. She was still smiling.

"What?" Arnie said. He felt a little better now that he'd got that off his chest. "What?"

"I'd say you're a very bright little boy."

"I ain't so little," Arnie said. And everybody laughed again.

"Have you been listening to all this?" the judge said to the man and woman in the corner.

"We've been listening," the man said. He was a thin man, with very dark skin. He was dressed in what looked like an expensive suit. The woman was lighter. She looked a little like Arnie's mama, or what he could remember of his mama.

"I'll ask you what you think a little later," the judge said to them. "Miss Schultz will take Arnie out into the hall while we talk."

"If it's about me," Arnie said, "I want to listen."

"You just simmer down," the judge said. "And let me run this courtroom."

"Oh, I think he can hear it," the thin, dark man said.

"Well, if you think so," the judge said.

Arnie turned so that he could look carefully at the man. He had kind eyes and a nice way of looking at you. He looked at you as if he knew what you were like, but he liked you anyway.

"I think he's the kind of boy we'd like to have," the man said.

"That's wonderful," the judge said. "Arnie," she said, "how would you like to live with Mr. and Mrs. Young?"

"I don't know," Arnie said. And he didn't. How would he know? He had never seen these people before. Something was stirring in him, but he didn't know what. "I like it at Juvy Hall," he said.

"Oh?" the judge said.

"Sure, there's guys to play with. Baseball and stuff."

"Well," the judge said.

"Besides," Arnie said, "who wants to go off someplace else where they don't want me when I do something bad? Ever place I been, I do something bad."

"You mean a foster home?" the judge said.

"Yeah."

"Oh, I see. Well, how would you like some place where they had to keep you? Even if you were bad?" She smiled. "You see, Mr. and Mrs. Young want to adopt you. You'd be their own son. Would you like that?"

Arnie looked at Mrs. Young. She smiled at him and wiped her eyes on a handkerchief. Mr. Young just smiled. "We have a nice place," she said.

"They'll give you a home. They told me they'd even send you to college, if you want to go."

What was stirring in Arnie? He didn't know. Something deep inside him was stirring and he didn't know what it was. He almost wanted to cry, but he couldn't do that. He wanted to be by himself, but he couldn't do that. "Could I just try it for a while?" he said to the judge.

"I think that would be all right. Wouldn't it, Mr. Young?"

"Sure," Mr. Young said. "Maybe he won't like us."

"What if I steal something?" Arnie said.

"We'll still want you," Mr. Young said. "Are you going to steal again?"

"I don't know," Arnie said. "I didn't know I was going to the first time."

"Let's see how it works out," the judge said. "You can go home with the Youngs now."

Arnie got up and walked over to the man and woman. He didn't know what to say. He felt very shy and the thing deep inside him was still stirring around. Mrs. Young patted him on the shoulder. "I hope you like your room," she said.

Behind him, the judge was talking quietly to Miss Schultz. But Arnie could hear them.

"Do you think he'll be back?" Miss Schultz said.

"For theft?" the judge said.

"For anything," Miss Schultz said.

"Who knows? All you can do with people is to try. And hope. We can just hope he makes it."

Arnie didn't know himself. How could he know? But he'd give it a try.

SHY BOY

by JANE SPRAGUE

He paid his dime, feeling brave and old.
The music was already playing.
Lots of moving, swaying, twisting girls and boys
Danced to the heavy drumbeats
Thundering from the jukebox,
Echoing through the crowded gym.

He found a place against the wall.
He felt the cold, safe, paint-smooth blocks
Through the thin cloth of his best sport shirt.
He touched his hair gently.
Did he look all right this time?

The first dance ended.
He looked at the girls
Who stood at one end against the wall,
Just as he did.
For the same reason?

He felt their eyes upon him.
Someone among them giggled.
He felt the hot blush start at his throat.
He hung his head away from the dim light
Until his blazing face felt cool and dry again.

The dances went on.
Who could he choose?
What if she laughed?
What if she wouldn't dance?
He touched his hair again
Just to make sure.

Where had the time gone?
This was the last dance!
He pulled himself loose
From the strong wall.
He would ask that one,
That little one with the long hair
And the tiny gold cross at her throat.

He stepped toward her on trembling legs.
Words would not come out of his mouth.
He looked at her and held out his hand.
She hid her eyes from him, but she took his hand!

He put his sweaty fingers against her slender back.
He swayed with her, standing in one place.
His heart pounded louder than the drums.
She leaned back and smiled at him,
One little quiet smile.

At home that night, a question.
"Oh, I went to the dance today.
It was pretty good," he said.

BACKSTAGE

by ROBERT CRUMB

"I will not go on the stage with that dress on!" Katherine said. "And that gray makeup — it makes me look old and ugly!"

"You had better get that costume on and your makeup on," Herb, the manager, warned. "It's getting close to curtain time."

"I suppose you're going to tell Mr. Harper. Well, don't just stand there. Go ahead. He's going to find out soon enough anyway."

"Oh, come on, Katherine," Susan, the pretty girl next to her, said. "It's for the part."

"You can talk! You get to wear the beautiful clothes."

"But you have the good lines. I'd gladly give up the clothes for your laughs."

Herb was beginning to get angry. "Katherine, you just think you're the whole show. Every play you get worse. If you had Susan's costume, you'd want the one she's got," he said. "You're supposed to be playing a funny old maid. What do you want to wear, a high style dress?"

"You're funny. You really are funny!" Katherine yelled.

"Don't be dramatic," Herb said. "You can be that later. I have to tell Mr. Harper right away."

"Go ahead, you fink!" Katherine screamed as he left the dressing room.

The other girls in the dressing room were quiet while Susan tried to calm Katherine down. "You're making too much of this, Katherine," she said. "You know what Mr. Harper says about working together for the good of the show?"

"Yes, I've heard that old line for two years. Well, what about the good of me? I'm not going out there in that ragged old dress again!"

"Have it your way," Susan said as she started putting on her makeup.

Katherine sat at the makeup table. Her face showed how mad she was. After several minutes, there was a knock on the door.

"May I come in?" It was Mr. Harper's voice.

"The door's open," Susan said.

"Here it comes," Katherine sighed as the door opened.

"Okay, what's the trouble?" Mr. Harper asked.

Katherine sat there with her lower lip sticking out.

"I asked you what the trouble is, Katherine."

"I'm not going out there with that dress on and that silly makeup!"

"Why not? Your part calls for it."

"Because the girls laughed at me this afternoon. They kidded me after school."

"That's part of the show. It's part of your character. Do you have to be beautiful all of the time?"

"I can be funny without looking like something the cat dragged in."

"I never thought I would hear anything like this from you! How many plays have you been in, four or five? You've played all kinds of parts. You are a fine actress. I'm not saying you haven't been difficult at times, but you have always come through. Now this comes up. It's all silly! Now, you get in that costume and put on your makeup. It's only forty minutes until curtain time."

"I won't do it!" said Katherine, folding her arms. "I won't do it unless I can wear something else!"

"You seem to have forgotten something, young lady. You are responsible to me and every member of the cast. There's more than that, though. Out there will be people who bought tickets to see the show. It's your job to see that they get the best show possible."

"I won't go on!"

"I'm not going to argue with you. You get dressed, and do it on the double!"

"No!"

Mr. Harper's face grew red as he walked to the door and threw it open. "Herb!" he called.

"Yes, sir," Herb said from the bottom of the stairs.

"Send Alice up here right away." Mr. Harper turned to Katherine once again. "This is your last chance. Will you, or won't you wear that costume?"

"No," Katherine said, but her voice was not as sure as before.

Alice came running up the stairs. She held her horn-rimmed eye glasses so they wouldn't fall off.

"Have you got your prompt book?" Mr. Harper asked quickly.

"Yes, it's right here."

"Then start studying Katherine's lines."

"You mean the part of Ethel?" Alice asked, very confused.

"Yes. You should know most of the lines already. You've been on book for all the rehearsals. Do you think you know the part?"

"I think so, but —"

"Good. Sue, you'll help her with the lines. The rest of you girls keep it quiet so they can get some work done." He went to the door again. "Herb!"

"Yes, sir," Herb called back.

"Get up here right away and bring a play book."

"Mr. Harper," Alice whispered, "I don't think I can do it."

"Nonsense. Of course you can."

"I'm too shy, Mr. Harper. "I'm afraid I'd faint dead away."

"You just think so. Haven't you ever wanted to act?"

"Yes, I think everyone has, but everyone can't do it. It's for kids like Susan and Katherine, but not for me, Mr. Harper."

Katherine smiled a little smile behind Mr. Harper's back.

"If they can do it, you can do it. Think of it that way."

"I'll try to think of it that way, but —"

"Fine. You'll learn a lot on that stage. You and Susan get to work now." Mr. Harper turned once again to Katherine. "You, Miss Star. Get out of that chair. Leave backstage at once. You can sit out front and watch the show if you can buy a ticket."

Katherine said, "My mother's out there tonight."

"Good. I hope she enjoys the show."

"She came to see me. She will be disappointed."

"Will you wear that costume?" Mr. Harper asked.

Katherine held back again. She was thinking hard. "Yes, if we can tone down the makeup a little, take up the hem of the dress and —"

"Leave the dressing room, please," Mr. Harper said, trying to keep from really getting mad.

Katherine stood up, biting her lip. As she went through the door, she began to cry.

When Katherine started down the steps, Susan turned to Mr. Harper.

"Oh, this is terrible," she said.

"Yes, it is terrible, for Katherine. Her selfishness is making her a very unhappy girl but we haven't got time to worry about that now. We have a show to do. Susan and Alice, you two start on those lines, please." Mr. Harper turned to Herb as he came into the room. "Listen, and listen carefully, Herb. Katherine is out of the show. Alice is taking over. She knows most of the lines, but she will be a little shaky. We're going to fake it. Have you got the book?"

"Sure," Herb said, holding it up.

"Good. She comes on stage on page eleven, right?"

"Yes, page eleven," Herb said.

"She'll be able to remember her first lines. Then she looks for a telephone number. Put pages twelve through fourteen in the telephone book. Paste them in. Got it?"

"Right."

"Then she goes and sits at the table. Pages fifteen through twenty can be on the tabletop. After that she goes off, and that's the end of the first act. In act two, she enters on page twenty-nine. In this scene she reads the paper. Line the newspaper with pages twenty-nine through thirty-four. The next few pages she'll have to be on her own. On page thirty-eight she sits at the desk. She can stay there through to the end of the act."

Mr. Harper went on, giving Herb instructions for the entire play. When he finished he said, "Now, go down and rig the set for her, Herb."

"Right you are," Herb said, rushing out.

It was eight twenty-five, five minutes until curtain, when Alice came down from the dressing room. Mr. Harper was waiting in the wings.

"How do you feel, Alice?" he asked.

"Like I'm going to be sick."

"You'll get over that. Once you get on the stage, things will change. Remember, just play the part as I told Katherine to do it."

"May I wear my glasses? I can't see without them," she asked timidly.

"Of course."

"What if I forget my lines?"

"They're all over the stage, and if you get in trouble, the others will be able to help you. Just keep a cool head."

"A cool head," she repeated.

"It's bad luck to wish you good luck, so I'll just say, 'Break a leg.'"

Alice smiled weakly. "Thank you," she said.

"Just remember, what's the worst thing that could happen to you? If anything really goes wrong, we'll fake it with lights. Have you got your chin up?"

"Yes, sir."

"Good. I won't be backstage. You'll be on your own."

"Yes," Alice said as she leaned against the prop table. Mr. Harper left.

All of the cast and crew were around her now.

"You can do it, Alice. We know you can do it," Tom, the leading man, said.

"We're for you," Susan told her.

The rest of the cast patted her on the back, but Alice was scared.

"One minute," Herb called. "Places. Places."

The actors who opened the play went on stage. The lights came up full, and the curtain opened. The actors began working. The laughs were few at first, as usual. As the play went along there were more laughs. It was close to Alice's time to go on stage.

"I can't do it! I can't go on!" she said.

"Aw, come on," Herb said. "It's nothing."

Alice heard her cue to enter. Susan spoke the line, "I wonder what happened to Ethel?"

"I can't move!" Alice whispered. She seemed to be nailed to the floor.

"I wonder what happened to Ethel?" Susan said again.

"You're gonna move," Herb said, grabbing Alice and giving her a shove through the door of the set. She slid halfway across the stage and landed in a heap.

The audience screamed in laughter.

It was time for Alice's line. Could she do it? She opened her mouth and a little squeak came out. She tried again. "I'm right . . . here."

Once again the audience laughed, for she was sitting right in the middle of the stage!

Alice pulled herself to her feet and gave the next line. It crossed her mind that the second line was easier to say. In fact, the lines got easier as she went along. She went to the telephone book, just as the stage directions said. All of the lines were there. She began to relax a little. Strange how everything she had seen and heard in rehearsal came to her now.

The audience laughed loudly when she spoke a line. It felt good to hear them reacting. Before long, she was actually playing the part! She *was* Ethel! The more the audience laughed, the more she knew exactly how to make them laugh. She walked around the stage sloppily, as Ethel would do. Her voice took on new sounds. The old dress got laughs, too.

She found out she didn't need the pages of the book that were pasted about the stage. Before she knew what happened, the curtain fell on the first act.

Herb rushed up to her. "You were great!" he said.

"Sensational!" echoed Tom.

"Oh, Alice, I knew you could do it!" Susan added.

She met Mr. Harper coming backstage. "That was quite an entrance you made, Alice," he said. "But from there on it got better and better. You became the real Ethel! Don't worry about a thing. Just go on playing it as you are."

The act break seemed forever, but before long she was on the stage again. The audience laughed again at almost every line she spoke.

The second act seemed to go fast, and the third act raced along in the same way. When the curtain fell, Alice couldn't believe it.

The curtain went up again for the curtain call. Each actor went on stage separately. She heard the applause grow louder as she went on. She was never so proud! Her eyes filled with tears.

After the curtain calls everyone in the cast and crew ran to her, to congratulate her.

Back in the dressing room, as she was taking off her makeup, Mr. Harper came in. "How do you feel?" he asked.

"A little shaky, but just wonderful!" Alice said.

"Would you like to do the two final shows tomorrow?"

"I'd love to!" she answered, trying to be calm.

"Then, they're yours. You gave a great performance. I guess I don't have to tell you that. The audience told you first."

"Thank you. Thank you, sir!"

Mr. Harper laughed, "The laughs and clapping kind of get to you, don't they?"

"I never knew! I just never knew that it would be such a good feeling!"

"Well, we all like attention and love. That's what we feel we get on the stage. I'm glad it turned out so well, and I want to thank you for taking over. Some of your actions are not just right, but we'll work them out before tomorrow. You seem to have the lines pretty well, but why don't you look them over tonight before you go to sleep?"

"Sleep? Who can sleep?"

Mr. Harper laughed again. "Well, look them over anyway."

"Oh yes, I will."

"I'll see you tomorrow, then," said Mr. Harper as he left the dressing room.

Mr. Harper started to cross the stage. Katherine was standing in the middle of the stage, waiting for him.

"Well, Katherine, did you like the show?"

"Yes, I liked it, but I would rather have been on the stage," she said.

"Of course, you would."

"Ethel's costume and makeup don't look too bad from the audience," Katherine said.

"Sounds to me as if you want your part back."

"Why not? I could play it tomorrow. I'll wear the costume."

"I'm sorry, Katherine, but it's Alice's part now. You gave it up when you refused to go on tonight."

"You've been against me from the start," Katherine shouted. She turned and walked smartly toward the stage door.

"Don't you think Alice has earned the part more than you have?" Mr. Harper almost shouted, too. "Alice faced the audience without rehearsal time. You let down the entire cast. Sure, the play came off all right, but even if it hadn't, you would be out of the show."

Going down the back steps of the auditorium, Katherine held her fingers in her ears to keep from hearing Mr. Harper.

GIRL CRAZY

by JANE SPRAGUE

Some guys go for baseball. Some guys are crazy about slot cars. But T.C. was girl-crazy. Everybody in his homeroom knew it. T.C. didn't care. He just liked girls. That was all.

And then, one day, Rochelle Sharp joined T.C.'s homeroom. She was slim and quiet. She wore a neat white blouse and a dark blue pleated skirt. When she walked, the skirt swayed back and forth. T.C. thought of dancing just to look at her. He went up to the teacher to ask if he could help.

"I bet T.C. will flip over this baby, Joe." Ronnie was talking to T.C.'s best friend.

"Yeah. He won't even see the other girls now."

"But I bet you a nickel she won't go for *him*, Joe. You wanna bet?"

"Sure. Look at him up there, showin' off. Man, he's flipped already. Sure, I'll bet." Joe reached into his pocket and showed Ronnie his nickel. "No chick can turn that dude away. She'll be his baby in no time, just like all the rest."

Then the tardy bell rang. After the kids said the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, they sat down to listen to the morning bulletin. Rochelle sat two rows away from T.C. He could turn around and see her whenever he wanted to.

Ronnie leaned over from his seat opposite T.C.

"Hey, man. Are you going to play in today's game? Our homeroom is playing. We need you?"

"Don't bug me, man. I'm busy. I dig this new Rochelle chick."

"Aw, she's just a girl. T.C., are you going to play this noon or not?"

Ronnie was beginning to get mad. T.C. was carrying this Rochelle bit too far.

"Aw, forget it then T.C. We'll make out okay in the game without you." Ronnie got up and slammed his books together as the bell rang. But T.C. didn't even notice. He was looking at Rochelle's program card and leading her out into the hall for her first class.

"Come *on,* Ronnie. We've got to make it to gym. No use talking to T.C. for a while. He won't even hear you." Joe was waiting for Ronnie by the door.

"He's crazy. She's just a girl. You can't have any real fun with girls. I'd rather play ball any day than go to some dumb dance with a chick. You have to do all the payin', too. It ain't fair!"

Ronnie was still telling Joe how bad it was to date girls as they went on to class.

The next morning the first boy in homeroom was T.C. Then Sharon and Brenda came in. They put their books down and went over to talk to T.C.

"I've got my new coat on, T.C. Do you like it?"

"Lemme see, Baby. Yeah. It's nice. How come it has this belt buttoned on like this?"

T.C. unbuttoned the belt from the back of the coat and held it up over his head.

"Now, T.C. you put that back. I want to wear it with the belt on." Brenda tried to grab the belt, but he held it too high for her to reach it.

T.C. laughed and changed the belt to the other hand, just to tease her more. Brenda laughed, grabbed again and missed.

Sharon laughed, too. Somehow she didn't feel so bad now about Brenda's new coat. Sharon's coat looked old and raggedy next to Brenda's. But T.C.'s playing with the belt sort of took away the newness of the coat. Sharon laughed again as Brenda missed the belt, and then hit T.C. on the arm.

T.C. felt Brenda's blow, and it seemed so weak that he felt sorry for her. Girls really aren't very strong, he said to himself. They need men to take care of them.

"Here, Brenda. I'll fix it right. Turn around." T.C.'s careful fingers buttoned the belt back on the coat while Brenda twisted around trying to see over her shoulder.

"There. It's okay now." T.C. glanced at Rochelle's empty desk. Then he followed Sharon to her desk and picked up her purse.

"T.C., you give me that!" Sharon made a grab for the purse as T.C. moved down the aisle making her chase him. He turned to face her. He used his height and his long arms to keep the purse just out of reach. He grinned to see how upset she pretended to be.

"I'm going to open it *up*!" T.C. teased her more and more.

"If you *do* . . . listen, T.C. Now, I'm not playin'. You give me that purse."

T.C. saw the teacher look at the clock. The bell was going to ring. He didn't want to be marked tardy or get Sharon in trouble.

"Okay, okay. I'll give it to you. Cool down, now. Cool down." T.C. put the purse gently into Sharon's hands and watched her smile back at him. She knew it was a game he loved to play. She loved to play it, too. Girls were fun. They made him feel funny, sort of strong and tender at the same time.

Sharon slipped into her desk and T.C. went down the aisle to his own. The bell started to ring just as he noticed that Rochelle was in her desk. She was doing some math. She must have come in while he was fooling with Sharon.

After the homeroom business was over, T.C. asked permission to speak to Rochelle. He went to her desk and stood there. She kept on doing math.

Just from habit, he reached out and began to toy with the pen she had on her desk. His grin was friendly and full of fun.

Rochelle didn't even look up as far as the grin. She looked at his long, slender fingers playing with her pen. Then she quickly took the pen and put it in her purse. The purse snapped shut with a little pop. T.C. felt as if all the fun in him had burst with a little pop, too. His grin began to disappear. Suddenly, he felt very small and foolish. It was a strange feeling for T.C.

"I was just wonderin' if everything was okay yesterday. I mean did you find your way around all right?"

Rochelle did a neat bit of addition on the neat math paper. Without looking up, in a soft low voice, she said, "I got along fine, thank you."

For the first time in his life, T.C. couldn't find a thing to say to a girl. His empty hands couldn't find any place to go and he felt as if everybody in the room was staring at the back of his neck. When the bell rang, he went down the aisle and out the back door. He didn't wait for anyone.

"Did you see that, Joe? I told you Rochelle isn't going to go for T.C. the way the rest of the girls do. He's not getting *any* place." Ronnie was laughing at T.C. already. He secretly wished he could be like T.C. but when he teased the girls, they just got mad. Ronnie couldn't seem to make them laugh the way T.C. could. Now that T.C. was having trouble for once, it made Ronnie feel better. No cat should be a success every time.

All that day T.C. played and teased and made the girls laugh. He pulled their hair, stole their books, hid their purses and told their secrets. And all day long, they screamed and chased, pouted and pleaded and laughed back at him. They knew he was paying attention to them and they enjoyed it.

But underneath his playing around, T.C. was puzzled about Rochelle. Why didn't she look at him? Why didn't she let him play with the pen? Was she really such a *student*? Couldn't she even take time to make friends?

Or was she just stuck up? Maybe she thought T.C. wasn't good enough? Or maybe she just didn't like his looks.

Right in the middle of teasing a girl about her new hair-do, T.C. stopped. He waved his hand at the kids as if he just remembered something and ran across the yard to his last class.

As soon as school was over he went straight home. He unlocked the door and listened. No one was home. His mother worked until five and his big sister and the two little kids wouldn't be home for about half an hour or more.

He went into the bathroom and shut the door. By the light over the sink, he looked at his face in the mirror. Smooth skin, hair in a Quo Vadis, eyes dark brown, and bright clean even teeth. What was it that Rochelle didn't like?

He pulled the footstool over and stood up on it. He twisted around to see himself from every angle. He had a slender body, long legs, and narrow hips. His slacks were the latest continental style, tightly fitted below his pale orange Sir-Guy shirt. What could Rochelle not like?

He heard the front door open and close. That would be his sister, Julie.

T.C. followed Julie into the kitchen. He made himself a thick peanut-butter and jelly sandwich and opened a coke.

"What are we having for supper?" He set his coke on the shelf beside the sink where his sister was working.

"Hamburgers and French fries."

"Julie, do the guys in high school act different? I mean around girls?"

"Sure they do."

"What do the guys do that's so different?"

"Oh, they act more mature. You know, none of that racing and chasing and horseplay stuff. They still like to tease, but they mostly use words. They don't expect girls to act like boys the way they do in junior high school. And they have more respect for a girl's property and clothes. They are finding out how much it costs to try to look nice, I guess. They seem to understand that a girl doesn't want to have her hair mussed up or her purse dropped. Little kids don't think about those things . . . say, how's that grease doing? I don't want it to burn or smoke."

"But don't the other guys laugh at you if you treat a girl nice?"

"I don't know about the guys, but the girls don't laugh. They really go for a guy who has mature manners and who treats them like ladies."

T.C. set the empty bottle back in its carton and wandered into the living room. He turned on the TV and fell onto the couch, his legs up over the arm. But he wasn't watching the screen. He was seeing himself pulling Mary Jean's new hairdo, playing with the belt of Brenda's new coat, teasing Sharon with her purse. They were trying to be ladies, too. But he wouldn't let them do it. Growing up sure wasn't as much fun as he had thought it would be. He gave a deep sigh.

The music came on loud and the screen caught his attention. Oh, good. A Tom and Jerry cartoon. Everybody likes those. Even my old lady thinks they're neat.

T.C. turned the other way on the couch and stretched out with his hands behind his head. He felt good watching cartoons. It sort of rested his mind from school . . . and girls.

For the next week T.C. amazed his teachers and his friends. He sat in his seat as soon as he got to the room. He smiled at the girls, but he never touched their things. He played ball with the boys and handed in his homework. Not once did he go near Rochelle, not even in homeroom.

Then on Friday, there was going to be a Drop-in dance after school. Only couples could go. All the girls looked especially nice today, hoping some shy boy would get brave enough to ask them at the last minute. Rochelle was wearing her dress with the dance names all over it.

T.C. bought a bag of popcorn and stood leaning against the outside wall of the cafeteria. He watched the kids buying popcorn. Rochelle stepped away from the window with a buttery bag overflowing in her hands, just as a big A-9 boy came by. He reached out and grabbed the whole bag away from her, spilling some popcorn on the ground.

She gave a little cry and looked right at T.C. She knew right where to look, he realized. So she had been watching for him! His heart began to pound.

The big A-9 helped himself to some of the popcorn and held out the bag invitingly to Rochelle.

"I'll give it back to you, if you'll go to the dance with me."

Rochelle glared at him and did not try to get the popcorn.

"Hey, man, don't you know that's not the way to treat a lady?" T.C. spoke carefully, measuring his size against the A-9. He figured the A-9 wouldn't want to start trouble over a bag of popcorn. Rochelle was looking up at T.C. with pride and surprise.

"She doesn't want that popcorn now you've messed with it anyway. Besides, she's going to that dance with me."

The A-9 tried to speak but he choked on the popcorn and started to cough. T.C. offered his own bag of corn to Rochelle and led her calmly away toward the field to watch the ball game.

"Oh, thank you, T.C. I hate big rough boys like him. But you were wonderful. I would love to go to that dance with you."

Rochelle put her hand on T.C.'s arm and smiled at him for the first time. T.C. felt his knees go limp, and he hardly heard Ronnie and Joe as they came up behind him and hurried by toward the field.

Ronnie lost his bet after all. "Okay, okay. You'll get your nickel, Joe. You were right. I just don't see how he does it, though. *Every time*! It just ain't right for a guy to get every chick he wants to flip for him."

"Aw, you're just jealous. And you're too immature, Ronnie. T.C. says you gotta grow up more. I think he's right, too." Joe laughed and got ready to run.

"Oh, yeah? You wait 'til I get my hands on you." Ronnie took off across the field after a laughing, dodging Joe.

As T.C. walked with Rochelle and watched them, he thought, growing up's not easy, but it's going to pay off all right.

Rochelle said, "Tell me what you're thinking about, T.C."

"Oh, man," thought T.C., "this is *it*!"

"I was just thinking about you, Rochelle, and how nice it is to be around a girl who acts grown-up. You know?"

JUST A FEW LAUGHS

by JACQUELINE LUDLUM

If she starts to sing again, I'll crack up. Funny how it hurts to hold back a laugh that wants to come out.

I'm sitting in the aud and we're having a singing rehearsal for graduation.

"Sit up. Get off those shoulders. Think tall. Sing tall. Sing like this." That's old Miss Small. Oh man, she is going to tweet tweet like a bird again. I can't laugh. I just cannot laugh! She'll kick me out of the aud, and that means Felson's office. And NO graduation!

"La, la, la — Sing children. Sing with your hearts."

I can't hold it — I can't. She is so funny. Get on TV, honey, you got it made with that la, la, la bit. You're killing me.

I just sort of roll off the aud seat. The other guys are chicken, so they don't laugh. But not me. I "ho, ho, ho" like Santa Claus.

It's quiet for a second.

"Out, out, out, Joe! I know it is you. Out, I say! Present yourself to Mr. Felson. At once!"

She is a foot shorter than a tall Coke, but she's got the bark of a hungry hound dog.

As I get up, I fall over Louie's big feet. Crash! I'm down on the floor again picking my way over legs and shoes.

Now they laugh. Thanks a lot. When I needed you, no laughs, you bums!

By now, Miss Small has hotfooted it towards my row. She looks down at me and shakes her finger. "Young man, you stand up this minute."

I stand up. Then I say very politely, "I'm standing, Miss Small."

"Well, don't stand there — move!"

I can't win for losing.

So I start for the side door and Felson's office. I know the way.

When I get to the door, I have a feeling I need to say one more thing. I open my mouth and stick out my tongue. A beautiful and loud "Bronx cheer" cuts across the space between me and Miss Small. At that same minute, I walk right into the arms of Mr. Felson, Boys' Vice-Principal.

"Shall we dance?" What else can I say to him?

That's sort of the story of my life — poor timing. And besides, I can't help it if I like a few laughs.

I know more about Mr. Felson's office than he does, because I spend lots of my time there.

He starts right out at me. "Joe, what am I to do with you?"

He can't figure me out either.

Then some more of the same old fireside chat. "Spit wads yesterday. Wet paper towels hanging all over Miss Small's VW the day before that. Locking poor Mrs. West in her supply room on Monday. Tying knots in their street clothes while the guys were on the field a week ago. Joe, you are too much for one school. It's not bad enough you do these things, but you always get caught and I have to deal with you, and I am too old to have to suffer so."

It is sort of sad to see him take on. I better say something to make him feel better.

"I'm not mean, Mr. Felson. I like a few laughs." That was the wrong thing to say.

"Laughs? Get on television if you want laughs. This is a school not a comedy show."

Nag, nag, nag. All the time nag.

"Joe," he says very quietlike. "Joe, I should suspend you, but I'm going to give you another chance because you can't be all bad. Besides, graduation is so close. What will it be? You have a choice. Swats? Clean up the Cafeteria? Or after-

Life is full of choices. So I think a minute. Swats? No, I still hurt from last week. Detention? No, I like my afternoons free for out-of-school laughs.

"Clean up the Cafeteria, Mr. Felson." I smile as I say it. I'm the friendly kind of a guy.

"All right. You have cleanup for one week. Now that also means no trouble in any of your classes. No laughs at all. Is that clear? Give the teacher in the Cafeteria this note."

Mr. Felson wipes at his head with a handkerchief. Funny, it isn't very hot today.

Walking into the cafeteria, I make up my mind, I'll never laugh again.

Miss Kelly is standing by the wall. "Here is a note from Mr. Felson." She reads the note. Then she looks up at me and her mouth drops open. She seems to turn green.

"*You* are to help keep the cafeteria clean?" She really knows how to hurt a guy by the way she says that.

"I know what you mean, Miss Kelly, but this is a new Joe talking. No trouble, no goofing off, no laughs, strictly business."

Everything goes along fine. I'm cleaning tables with my big wet rag. Then I happen to look across the table and there is Charley Johnson. He is a real jerk. What a slob! I watch him shovel in those mashed potatoes like there is no tomorrow.

I walk over that way to see if I can help keep things clean. He really is a slob.

I accidentally hit Charley on the head as I go by. But I can tell right away, he doesn't think it's an accident. So he has some gravy and mashed potatoes in his eyes and up his nose. It could happen to anyone. I didn't tell him to get so close to the dish.

With that, Charley jumps out of his chair and it flies back and hits a kid who is eating soup. This kid has no manners and the soup spills all over the table. There's a guy standing next to him and he gets shook up. Next thing, I see this kid's lemon pie which he is carrying, flip over and land cream-side down on some girl's hair.

Then Charley comes at me. A fellow has to protect himself, so I jam the wet wiping rag in his face.

"Here, Charley, let me wipe off those mashed potatoes, old pal, old pal." I only want to help. I step back a little.

Two buddies of Charley decide to get in the act with chocolate cake. The cake is flying right at me, so I duck. Just then Miss Kelly walks up behind me to break it up.

Like I say, the story of my life is poor timing and too many laughs. Mr. Felson gives me no choices this time — five hard belts, suspension, and no graduation.

But I still like a few good laughs.

HENRY LEE AND THE PHOTOGRAPH

by JANE SPRAGUE

"This is your room, Henry Lee." Jerry set Henry Lee's big brown suitcase on the floor beside the big bed with a clean white cover on it. "Now that my brothers are in the Army, we've got lots of room."

"You sure have. There's a table to do homework on and a radio, too. It's nice."

"My room's across the hall. Come on over and see it."

Henry Lee sat on the edge of Jerry's bed and looked all around the room. He tried to make himself believe that he was going to live in this house for a whole year. He wasn't even going back home for Christmas.

Finally his eyes noticed a small photograph stuck in the mirror over Jerry's dresser. It was a picture of Jerry like the big one Henry Lee saw in the living room.

Henry Lee sat up straight. What if he could have *his* picture taken? What if he could have a big one just like Jerry's? He could send it back home for Christmas. It would be like a visit. His kinfolk would all come and see it! That would be good!

"I'll help you sign up for school tomorrow."

"I never went to a really big school before, Jerry. Back home we only have little schools."

"It's not such a big school. All B-7's feel scared the same as you. When you get to be in the ninth grade, like me, it doesn't seem big any more."

"Everything looks big to me here, your house and your car and your TV set. We don't even have a TV back home. And you know that big picture on top of the bookcase? The one with you in it?"

"That old ugly thing?"

"I don't think it's ugly. Do you think I could ever save up the money to get my picture made like that?"

"Sure you could. They took that picture at school. They come and take all the kids' pictures. You can exchange them with your friends and give the big ones to your folks for Christmas."

The next morning Henry Lee asked so many questions on the way that the boys were almost late for school.

"Now listen, Henry Lee. Your homeroom is down there at the end of the hall, the last door on the right. I'll meet you right here after school. Okay?"

"Okay, Jerry. Hey, how much do those pictures cost, anyway?"

"A dollar and a quarter. Now I gotta *go*, Henry Lee!"

Jerry was gone and Henry Lee went to his room alone.

All through the strange and busy day, Henry Lee thought about what Jerry said. He just had to have a picture like that.

It would make his kinfolk so proud and happy, especially his grandmother. She was getting old and couldn't remember how her kinfolk looked when they weren't around her anymore. A picture would help her remember Henry Lee all right.

After school, on the way home, Henry Lee had another question.

"Jerry, how do they know which kids to take a picture of?"

"They take everybody. You don't have to worry about it. They take care of everything. But it won't happen for a long time yet."

"Do you have to have the money when they take the picture?"

"No, not until they come back to sell them. You get some little ones and a middle-sized one and a big one."

"Can you just buy the big one?"

"Nope, you have to buy all of them or none."

Henry Lee's face was full of trouble. Jerry laughed.

"Don't worry, Henry Lee. My father gives me the money to get mine. Now that you live with us, he'll give you the money, too."

"But I can't let him do that. My paw said I wasn't to take any extra money from Uncle Will, not after he's letting me live here to go to school and all."

"Oh, well then, I guess you can earn it all right."

The boys turned into the yard of Jerry's green and white house.

As the weeks went by, Henry Lee earned pennies and nickels and dimes by running errands and turning in pop bottles. Each night before he went to bed, he counted them up and put them away in a little box in his suitcase in the closet. Somehow, it seemed to keep him close to home to put the money in the brown suitcase that had once belonged to his father.

Finally, he had enough money. He was ready.

At last the homeroom teacher told the class to be ready to have their pictures taken tomorrow during gym class. She passed out special papers for Henry Lee and the rest to put their names on.

That night, Henry Lee didn't sleep very well. He kept seeing a photograph of himself in his dreams, but when he looked closely, it would be blank and empty. He tossed and turned and finally got up and dressed long before the late October sunrise came to the sky.

Henry Lee could hardly stand it to wait for Jerry to get ready. And as they walked to school, he had to keep stopping to wait for Jerry. Thank goodness, Henry Lee's gym class was first period. He could never have waited all day to find out about the picture taking.

Finally, the homeroom period ended and Henry Lee ran as fast as he dared to gym. His group was ready in line first, and they marched off to the girls' gym where the cameras were set up.

As Henry Lee stood in line, he heard lots of kids talking about "breaking the camera." The thought of this made him feel sick.

"Why are they going to break the camera?" He asked this quietly of a boy in his group who had explained things to him before.

"Oh, they are only kidding. They are trying to say that their friends are so ugly-looking that the camera won't be able to take their pictures. It's just a joke."

Henry Lee felt better, but the whole idea didn't seem very funny to him.

The line moved slowly until it was, suddenly, Henry Lee's turn. He stepped into a bright light and looked blindly around for the camera.

"Where's the camera?"

"It's right over here," said a lady's pleasant voice. Another lady with yellow hair came up to him and put her hands gently on his shoulders.

"Step back, just a little," Miss Yellow-hair said. "Is your name Henry Lee?"

"Yes, ma'm."

Miss Yellow-hair put her hands gently on each side of his face.

"Okay, Henry Lee, you look right over there now, and don't move your head. Watch that lady now."

The other lady behind the camera peeked over the top at Henry Lee. "That's fine. Now say 'cheese'!"

"Cheese!" Henry Lee thought that was a funny thing for her to tell him to say. And then he heard a dull little thump.

"That's it, young man."

"Is it all over?"

Miss Yellow-hair smiled at him. "It's all over."

Henry Lee stepped out of the bright lights and blinked his way out into the yard again. He caught up with his friend.

"How come she tells you to say 'cheese'?"

"Because it makes your mouth look like you're smiling. See?"

The boy stopped and said, "Cheese! Cheese!" Henry Lee could see what he meant all right.

"It sure doesn't take very long." Henry Lee felt good all of a sudden. Jerry was right. They hadn't forgotten him. He had been one of the first. This was a good school, all right.

For the next four weeks Henry Lee waited for news about the pictures. It was almost the beginning of December when the teacher told the class to bring their money the next day.

As soon as the school was open, Henry Lee was ready and waiting at the door of his homeroom. He waited patiently until the teacher got to his name on her list. Then he walked up to her desk to pay his money.

She looked into the box and then back at his name. She tried to match the number beside his name with the numbers on the envelopes. But no number matched! There was no envelope, no picture for Henry Lee!

His pennies and nickels and dimes were neatly arranged on the desk in front of the teacher. They were shiny from being counted so much.

"I'm sorry, Henry Lee. There seems to be a mistake. Are you sure you had your picture taken?"

"Yes, I'm sure. I said 'Cheese'." He could hardly believe that his picture was missing.

"Well, I'm sure they have the pictures then. Probably they were sent to a different homeroom. I'll check on it. I'll probably have them for you tomorrow."

Henry Lee scooped up his money and walked back to his desk. All around him in the room the kids were opening their envelopes, hooting and laughing at their own pictures and those of their friends. Henry Lee felt sick inside.

He should have known it was all too good to be true. They didn't really take his picture. He was just a little kid from the country. This big city school didn't care about him. They just let him hang around for his uncle's sake. The law said he had to be there, so they let him in. But they didn't really care. That Miss Yellow-hair, she knew it all the time. Even if he looked like all the other kids, she could tell by the way he talked that he came from a little town.

Henry Lee's heart was heavy and bitter all that day. But somewhere, a little flame of hope lived. Maybe there really were pictures. Maybe they would be in his room in the morning. He lived through the hours and went to bed early to have the night over with and the morning come faster.

Henry Lee only needed one look at his homeroom teacher's face to know that they had not found the pictures.

So it was true. They had let him down. The one thing he really wanted, the one happy thing he ever had a chance to give his folks was not going to be.

Henry Lee wanted to kick the whole world. He knew how to swallow his tears, but he couldn't keep his foot from kicking the leg of the teacher's desk as he turned to go to his seat. She must have understood a little of how he felt because she didn't say anything to him.

At lunch Henry Lee went to the cafeteria and spent seventy-five cents on a lunch fit for a king. Then he went to the candy line and bought fifty cents worth of candy. He ate all the candy by himself, too. As he ate he watched the kids exchanging pictures and talking about giving them away for Christmas.

During the period after lunch, Henry Lee began to feel pretty sick. He put his head down on the desk and tried not to think about his stomach.

"Don't you feel well, Henry Lee?" The teacher was standing by Henry Lee's desk. "Maybe you had better see the nurse."

When the nurse heard all about the lunch and the candy he had eaten, she called up his aunt and got permission to send Henry Lee home.

"You'll feel better out in the air, anyway, Henry Lee. Next time take it easy on your poor tummy."

Henry Lee took the pass she gave him and walked out of the front door of the school. Someone was coming up the front steps as he was going down.

"Miss Yellow-hair!" He was so surprised that he spoke out loud.

"Hello, there!" She smiled at him in a friendly way, but he could tell she didn't remember him. "Is school over already?" She looked at her watch.

"No, I'm going home early because I don't feel good. I hate this school. They promise, and then they don't keep it." Henry Lee couldn't stop, "And you helped. You let me think you took my picture, but you didn't. Just because I'm new in this school, because I come from back home, you didn't take my picture!"

Miss Yellow-hair listened to everything about the money he earned and not going home for Christmas, about the big lunch and all the candy and the other kids getting their pictures.

Then she said, "Sit down here on the steps, Henry Lee."

She tucked her skirt around her legs and sat down right beside him. Then she opened the big green box she had with her. It was full of picture envelopes.

"Now tell me your whole name, your homeroom number, and your grade."

He told her and she looked at the envelope for a minute.

"Here we are, Henry Lee. Let's look at these." She opened the envelope and peeked inside.

Henry Lee took the envelope and pulled out the big picture. His hands were shaking, he was so excited.

"Is that ME?" Henry Lee couldn't believe it. He looked quite different from the way he looked in the mirror. "I've never seen my picture before!"

Miss Yellow-hair took the picture and pretended to match it to Henry Lee's real face. "That's you all right, young man. Your mother will be proud of it, won't she?"

"I guess she will. Thank you . . . ma'm."

"What did you call me before? I like that better than 'ma'm'."

"Miss Yellow-hair?"

"Yes, Miss Yellow-hair. It makes me feel a little like Goldilocks and the Three Bears, but I like it."

Henry got up and then he remembered. Now he didn't have the money to buy the pictures! He began to feel sick again, worse than ever.

Miss Yellow-hair stood up, too. "Don't worry about that. We'll work a deal. If you feel well enough to stay and help me, I'll explain to the nurse. You see, some of the other kids' pictures, like yours, got sent to another school where they have another kid with the same name. We have them all straightened out now, but I want to get these to the right homerooms so they will have them in the morning. If you'll help me, that will pay for the pictures and a mailing envelope, too. How about it?"

Suddenly Henry Lee felt great. "It's a deal. I feel fine now. Which room did you want to go to first?"

Henry Lee led Miss Yellow-hair back into the school building, and the only heaviness he felt was the weight of the picture envelope tucked inside his shirt for safekeeping.

UNDERSTANDING A LARGER WORLD

THE BEACH

by JANE SPRAGUE

"Have you ever been to the beach before?" Mark asked. "Oh, sure. Lots of times." The other boy spoke as firmly as Mark did, but Mark knew he was lying.

The bus bounced along over the freeway. Kids' voices sounded loud and high. Everyone felt excited. An all-day trip to the beach on a hot summer day was a real treat.

Mark held his rolled-up towel on his lap. It was a plain old green towel. He wished it was a big beach towel like the ones they had at the supermarket.

A shout went up from the kids in the bus as they saw the ocean for the first time. It was shining smoothly in the morning sun. Low, easy waves rolled gently up to the smooth, brown sand.

Mark was surprised to see how low the waves were. He thought they would look like the waves in the surfing shows on TV. He wanted to say that to the kid beside him. But then he would have to admit that he lied about having been to the beach. He didn't want to do that.

The kids looked at the sea until the bus came to the place where it was supposed to park.

"All out, everybody." The head counselor of the day camp jumped off the bus. Everybody grabbed lunch bags and towels and rushed after him.

Mark followed the others as they ran as fast as they could toward the water.

Mark was surprised again to feel how much cooler it was here than in the city. And the sand was hard to run in. Mark's tennis shoes sank down deep in the sand. Then he had to pull hard to lift them out. Up ahead he noticed that the other kids were slowing down, too.

Finally, they got close enough to hear the waves. The kids were putting their things down in little groups. Mark wished he knew some of the kids better.

"Hey, kid. Let's go over there."

Mark stopped and turned. It was the boy he had talked to before. Mark felt glad that he had a friend after all.

"Okay." Mark followed the boy to a little raised bit of sand. Carefully they spread out their towels and put their lunches on one corner, out of the sand. Mark was glad the other boy's towel was even older and more worn looking than his own. Somehow, it made Mark feel friendlier.

"My name is Mark. What's yours?"

"Gus."

"Let's go in the water right away," Mark said. He sat down on his towel and started to take off his tennis shoes.

Gus sat down, too. But he was just looking out at the waves.

"Won't it be too cold?"

Mark looked over at Gus. Mark could see that he was shaking.

That's funny, thought Mark. I don't feel that cold. Or is he cold because he's scared?

Gus sat all huddled up on the towel. He wasn't smiling anymore.

"Have you ever been swimming on a morning like this?" Gus asked.

"Naw. I was only playin'. I've never been to the beach before." Mark stood up and pulled off his tee shirt. Somehow, it felt good to tell Gus the truth.

"You haven't?" Gus looked at Mark. "I haven't either. I was just foolin', too."

Just then both boys heard the screaming of the other kids as they splashed into the water for the first time. Gus and Mark watched them jumping and playing. They both wanted to get into the water, too, but they both held back. The bigness of the ocean and the roar of the waves seemed so different from the park swimming pool they knew so well.

"Well, come on. Let's go together," Mark said.

The word *together* seemed to give Gus courage, Mark thought, because suddenly Gus started to take off his shoes.

Mark sat down on his towel to pull off his jeans. It felt funny to strip down that way, out in public, even though he had his swimming trunks on under the jeans. He sort of pushed the jeans off as he looked around, making sure no girls were too close.

Then Mark waited and watched the others while Gus got ready.

Finally, Gus stood up. His trunks were yellow. Mark's were blue.

"I'm ready." Gus smiled shakily at Mark.

"Okay. Let's just take it easy. We don't have to jump in all at once."

Carefully the two boys picked their way across the dry sand to where the sand got dark and wet. Here the wind from the ocean was wet and much cooler. Both boys began to shake a little.

Together they stepped forward and let a little wave curl around their feet. The coldness of the water made the boys catch their breath.

They didn't talk. They were too busy feeling. They felt the oozy softness of the sand under the water. They felt the icy coldness of the water that made their ankles ache. They felt the brisk coolness of the wind.

Slowly, they walked into the deeper water, side by side. As they got used to the water, it didn't feel so cold. As they went deeper, they felt more and more proud of themselves.

In a few minutes they were standing up to their shoulders in the water. When a bigger wave came, they had to jump up a little to keep their heads above the water.

After a while, the boys relaxed a little. They looked around them at the others. They listened to the girls screaming and watched them trying to keep their hair dry.

Pretty soon, two girls came over near Mark and Gus. One time a really big wave rolled in. One girl lost her footing and grabbed hold of Mark's arm. He had a hard time keeping his own balance with her holding one arm, but he did it. Somehow, it made him feel a lot more sure of himself.

When the boys had been in the water for nearly an hour, they decided to get out for a while. They found they had moved down the beach from their towels. They were shaking from cold by the time they got back to their stuff.

Then they fell facedown on the towels and grinned at each other. Mark felt better than he had ever felt in his life. He lay there and tasted the little drips of salty water than ran down his face from his hair. He felt the heat of the sun warming his whole body at once. He felt clean and strong and sure of everything. He felt *alive*. It was a feeling he never wanted to lose.

Gus let out a big, deep breath.

"So this is the beach, eh? This is what all the people get excited about. I didn't really believe it would be this good, did you, Mark?"

"No, I didn't. I didn't think anything could be this good," Mark said.

RAINY NIGHT

by LORENZ GRAHAM

It was cold. You couldn't say it was really cold, but walking in the rain, it felt cold. Steven was walking along Franklin Avenue. Some of the store windows were still lighted.

Few cars were in the street. As he got near the bright lighted liquor store at 17th Street, he saw a black and white police car parked at the curb. He knew it was not late, and he just kept walking. The police car's radio was on and the motor was running and the windshield wipers going, but nobody was in the car. Steve was looking back at the car when he stepped from the curb to cross 17th Street and his right foot went in water over the shoe top. His feet were already wet, so he didn't mind too much. He started walking a little faster.

He wished he had a raincoat. His old coat was too small for him and, besides, it was torn and just about worn out. It was black, and he wanted a trench coat with a belt, the kind they called foreign intrigue. His mother had told him she was going to get him one, but she hadn't been able to get to it. Now it was getting cold and raining. He wished she would get it on credit. Now he needed the coat. At 19th Street he turned at the corner and walked east. It was dark along 19th Street. It was not late but no one else was walking. He was not afraid, but he kept walking along watching. He passed the big apartment house on the corner and four houses in the next block to reach 1432 where he lived in a small house that set back from the street. Steve was just about to turn into the broken walk leading to his house when he stopped. He jumped back. There on the ground was a man. He looked like he was dead. The twisted body lay on the side, half doubled up. Steve stepped backward and stood as still as the fallen man. He watched for a moment and then he looked around him. No one else was in sight. Then Steve broke and ran for the house, jumping over the three steps to the low porch, and pounded on the door.

"Open the door!" he shouted. "Open the door, quick!"

When the door opened he rushed inside, slammed the door behind him. "Where mom?" he asked.

"What's the matter, man?" asked Steve's older brother, Junior. "Somebody chasing you? You seen ghost? You're ashy."

Steve could not speak. His two little sisters came in from the kitchen. Then his mother came, wiping her hands on her apron.

"Steven," she said, "what happened?"

"A man, a man! Look like he dead. Out there. A white man."

"What you saying, boy?" Mrs. Merrywood asked, raising her hands in the air. "White man? Dead? How'd he get there?"

Steve tried to tell them that he didn't know but he saw this body there on the ground in the rain and nobody else in sight.

Mrs. Merrywood threw a coat over her head and, telling the girls to wait inside, she went out, with Junior and Steve behind her. It was still raining. Junior went close with his mother but Steven stayed back. He saw his mother bending there, examining the fallen man.

"He ain't dead," she said. "He sick. We got to get him inside."

"Don't touch him, Mom," Steve said. "We don't know what's the matter with him. You got to call a doctor. You got to get the ambulance. You can't touch him."

"That's right, Mom," Junior said. "That's the law."

"Never mind the law now. We get the doctor later," she said. "We got to get him in the house. He can catch his death laying here in the rain. Come on you all. Bring him in the house. I go fix a place for him."

Steve and Junior both didn't want to handle the man, but mom had told them what to do as she was going into the house. Junior lifted at the shoulders, and Steve picked up the man at his knees. He wasn't too heavy. Steve saw that the man was breathing with his mouth open and his eyes half open, too. They carried him inside where Mom had spread a blanket on the couch. Mrs. Merrywood, talking all the time, got the man out of his wet coat and loosened his shirt at the neck and loosened his belt at the waist. Mabel brought another blanket and Junior turned up the heat. Mom put a pillow under the man's head, and then she said, "Now we done what we could. Steven, you go over to Mrs. Jackson's and call police department. Tell them to send ambulance. Run now."

Steve ran. At the Jacksons they wanted to know all about it. Mr. Jackson warned about getting into trouble, but Mrs.

Jackson wanted to help and when she started back to the house with Steve, Mr. Jackson came along, still saying that he didn't want to get in more trouble. When they got back to the house, the smell of coffee was in the air and Mrs. Merrywood was kneeling with a cup of coffee, trying to get the man to drink. He was not awake, and the coffee ran down the side of his face.

Steve could tell from the man's clothes that he was not a wino. He was middle-aged, looked like a businessman, or maybe a teacher.

The police officers were not long in coming. They started asking a lot of questions. Mrs. Merrywood gave the answers. At first the policemen were kind of rough.

"You shouldn't have moved him," they said.

"But we couldn't leave him out there in the rain," Mrs Merrywood said.

"Are you a nurse?" one of them asked.

"No, I ain't a nurse," Mrs. Merrywood said. "But I got sense enough to know when somebody is sick and needs help."

The ambulance people came, three of them, one of them a young doctor with the thing they listen with in his pocket. He went directly to the man and started examining him.

"Any papers?" he asked.

The police said they hadn't checked yet, and they started going through the man's pockets. From his hip pocket they took his wallet. There was money in it. There was a card, too. They handed the card to the doctor.

"That's what I thought," the doctor said.

From his bag he got out a needle and a small glass bottle. Steve watched while the doctor broke the bottle and made with the needle to give the man a shot.

"I told them they shouldn't have moved him," one of the policemen said.

The doctor didn't say anything but kept watching the man's face. The man started to move. His eyes opened and closed again. The doctor held him down to keep him from moving too much. The man opened his eyes and looked around. He tried to say something.

"It's all right," the doctor said. "You've had an attack but you'll be all right. These good people took care of you. We're going to take you to the hospital. You'll be all right, understand?"

The other two ambulance men went out and came back with a stretcher. By this time the man was able to speak.

"Thanks," he said, "I want to give them something. Where is my money?"

The doctor handed the man his billfold.

"No, we don't want no pay," Mrs. Merrywood said. "It wasn't nothing for pay." The ambulance men got the man on the stretcher and as they were taking him out the door, he looked at Mrs. Merrywood and said, "Thanks again, I'll never forget."

"We told her she shouldn't have moved him," the policeman said again.

The doctor turned and looked at Mrs. Merrywood.

"Lady, you did the right thing," he said. "He would have died out there. You did exactly the right thing."

In the house nobody said anything for a while. Then Steven spoke. "He wanted to give us some money," he said.

"You don't take money for being decent," his mother said. "Nobody hungry here. You don't take money for just being decent."

"That's my mom," Junior said. "That's the way she is. That's the way she ever is."

I HAVE TO HAVE MUSIC

by **JANE SPRAGUE**

"Marie, turn that radio off for a while. I have a headache, and the baby just won't go to sleep."

Why are grown-ups like that? None of them understand how we feel. They just don't know what music means to us.

"Okay, I turned it off. And I'm through with the dishes. So I'm going over to Yolanda's house. I'll be back by about ten."

I feel good to be outside in the dark. It is a clear summer evening. Somewhere, little flowers are making the air smell sweet. It is cooler outside the house. Maybe I can get Yolanda to go for a walk. I can see her there, waiting for me on the steps of her front porch. I hear a radio playing.

"Hi, Marie. What took you so long?"

"Oh, my mother took a long time finishing her supper. The baby is cutting teeth and wants to be held all the time. She couldn't even eat, with him yelling every minute. I had to wait for her so I could wash all the dishes."

Yolanda turns the radio up louder. "Ohh!" she squeals. "Listen to *that*!"

We listen to the newest recording of our favorite band. The portable radio belongs to Yolanda's brother. It makes all the records sound better than my tiny pocket radio does.

"Yolanda, let's take the radio and go for a walk."

"Okay. I'll get my sweater."

She goes into her house and leaves the radio with me. I hold it up close to my ear.

It is like being in the middle of the band. I can feel the bass guitar strings beating in my head. It sounds so good. I feel safe when I listen. The music sort of wraps around me like a moving, beating heart. It makes me feel safe from the world.

"I'm ready, Marie. Come on."

Yolanda runs down the steps ahead of me. She is pretty. Much prettier than I am. Her hair is dark brown, with reddish lights in it. Her eyes are brown and soft, like Bambi's eyes in that Disney cartoon.

I run to catch up with her.

"Turn up the music, Marie."

I turn it up and carry it in my left hand so it is between us. We sing along with the music. I know the words so well I don't even have to think.

When the song is over, the commercial comes on. I turn it down and we talk.

"My mother hates our teen-age music," I tell Yolanda. "She only listens to old-fashioned stations. Even on TV, she likes to watch corny old bands."

"I know. My father is like that, too," she says.

"But I love the teen-age bands. Don't you?"

"You know I do," she says with a smile. "But I think it is hard to explain why."

A new record comes on. It is by a new band we've never heard of before. I turn the radio up again. It's fun to hear a new band and decide if it's going to be a hit or not. I think this one sounds too much like the Animals. The kids won't like them if they don't have something new, some sound of their own that's different.

"What do you think, Marie?"

"They sound too much like the Animals."

"Yes, *that's* just who they sound like! You're right. But this band isn't as good. Not enough beat."

"No, they'll never make it. We vote 'no.' Poor boys! They're out before they're even in."

We giggle to think how funny we are, acting as if our opinion really matters to anybody.

We are down on Main Street now, near the Taco Shop. That's as far as we dare walk. The street lights are far apart after the Taco Shop. If my father caught me walking there at night, he would lock me up in my room for a month.

"Did you bring any money, Marie?"

"No, I didn't. I'm not hungry anyway. I just ate."

"There are some boys in there!" I say to Yolanda. She grabs my arm. "Stop," I say. "I don't want to go in if we aren't going to buy something. The owner will chase us out."

"Maybe the boys will buy us a coke or something," Yolanda says. "Maybe John and Roy are there. Let's go a little closer and see."

We turn off the radio and walk up a little nearer. Yolanda stops at the corner.

"I'll go over and look in the window," I tell her. "You stay here."

I walk over and look in the shop. There are four or five boys in there, but none from our school. I turn around to go back to Yolanda.

She is waiting on the corner all right, but now she has company. Two guys. I can't tell who they are until I get up close.

"Marie, you remember my brother's friends, Hector and Alex? They were at my birthday party."

"Oh, I remember."

I remember Alex all right. He is a wild dancer. He had a tiny blonde with him at that party.

"How about a coke or something?" Hector says. He takes Yolanda by the arm and looks happy about it. "I'll carry the radio," he says.

"Maybe we can dance a little," Alex says. He looks at me as if he remembers that I like to dance. Did he really notice me?

We go into the shop. The boys that I saw there before are gone. We take a booth near the jukebox in the back of the shop.

"I'll order the cokes." Hector gets up and goes to the counter.

"I'll start the music." Alex digs a quarter out of his pocket. He slips it into the music machine and a green sign goes on. The top of the box has a lot of different colored lights in it.

They go on and off and make the top green, then red, then purple, then blue, then yellow. I watch it and wonder what records Alex will choose.

He's going to be mad when he finds out we can't dance in here.

Yolanda is fixing her lipstick. I wish I had mine, but I didn't carry a purse. She must have had hers in her pocket.

"Here you are." Hector brings four cokes in the large-size glasses, with straws.

"They're nice." Yolanda smiles at Hector.

"Here we go!" Alex claps his hands together as the jukebox crashes into life. It is a wild, fast beat that makes the little shop shake, it's so loud.

Yolanda looks over at the counter. She is waiting for the owner to come and turn it down. Grown-ups always want to hear their music like it's coming from across the street.

But then I see that the owner's son is behind the counter. He's young enough to still be alive. Alex is dancing alone, and the guy doesn't say anything. He is looking right at Alex, so I guess it's okay to dance.

"Come on, Marie."

I'm up before he finishes saying my name. We both feel the same about music. I knew that when I saw him dance at the party.

Hector and Yolanda are watching. Hector is shy and not so good at dancing. Alex is *my* kind of boy.

I look at his face. His eyes are open but he's not seeing me, or anything. He is lost in the music. His whole body moves exactly in time to the beat. The sound is so loud it seems like it's everywhere at once.

I forget about Alex. The music has me, too. I feel free, and yet I feel chained to the rhythm. It is like being hypnotized. I have to move when the music moves. I don't see the shop anymore. I don't feel scared and ugly anymore. I can forget my screaming baby brother . . . my tired mother . . . my worn-out father snoring in front of the TV.

Then the music stops. The silence rushes in. I look at Alex.

His eyes show that he is coming back from a faraway place.

He smooths his hair back with his hand and takes a deep breath. He looks at me and smiles. We are tuned in. I can feel it.

The next record starts. It is another wild one. Alex must have endless strength and energy. Like me, he feels dead unless he's dancing. He saves it up for times like this — he saves up all his loneliness, his anger, his broken hopes, his laughed-at dreams. He saves all the dying hours and dances them away to music. It is strong, fast music that never quits, never gives up, but goes on and on.

That's what they don't understand. The music gives us courage. We all can live in it. It is all young. There's no hate in it, no prejudice, no fear, no defeat . . . we are on our way in music. It frees us and lets us go. We find each other in the sound. We love the boys who make it, and we love each other because we understand ourselves within it. The music is more than what we eat or drink. The music feeds our souls. I have to have music!

Suddenly, right in the middle of the most beautiful line in the song, the music stops! I feel rage coming to my throat. Alex comes out of his trance with his fists ready.

"How many times do I have to tell you kids, no dancing in here?"

The owner is standing there with the plug of the jukebox in his hand. He couldn't even wait for the record to end. He looks funny dressed up like that, instead of wearing his apron and a white paper cap.

He glares at us like he hates us. Just because we were dancing?

Alex and I stand there coming back to earth the hard way. Hector and Yolanda sit and look at their empty coke glasses. Our glasses are still full, with their white straws floating in bubbles.

The owner hangs the cord of the jukebox across the grey, dead top that was dancing with lights a minute ago. I feel as if he has unplugged the rainbow.

He goes behind the counter and into the kitchen. You can hear him. He is giving his son the last piece of his little mean mind.

"Let's go." Alex is a different boy. His shoulders sag, his arms look thin and empty. His eyes are dull. He sees the ugly world now — no dreams anymore.

We all start to go. Alex leans over the table to pick up the radio for Hector. By accident — or was it by accident? — he tips over the two full glasses of coke that we didn't have time to drink. The glasses don't break, but the coke makes a big brown puddle on the fake-marble tabletop.

As we go out into the warm night, we hear the drip of the coke as it hits the floor in little thin streams.

The boys walk us to the corner of our street. Nobody talks. When they leave us, I turn on the radio. It is ten o'clock. Nothing but news.

I give Yolanda the radio, and we agree to try to go to the show tomorrow.

When I get home, I hear my brother still screaming. My father is asleep in front of the TV. He can sleep through anything, especially if it would mean he'd have to *do* something.

The screams are coming from the kitchen. My mother is heating a bottle and trying to quiet my brother. His face is red and his hair is wet from sweat. He must have cried all evening. My mother is squinting her eyes in the light. Her headache must still be bad.

She looks at me. She hates for me to go out at night. I don't want to hear her yell at me.

"Here, I'll take him," I say quickly. "You go to bed." I take the baby in my arms. I am always surprised at how heavy he is. Babies yell and scream, but they keep right on growing.

My mother tries the milk by shaking a few drops of it on the inside of her wrist. It is warm enough. She gives it to me, and I turn the baby around and shove the nipple of the bottle into his wide-open mouth. At first he doesn't even feel it, but then he tastes the milk instead of tears, and he begins to enjoy it.

My mother smiles a little. She pats my shoulder. Maybe she is glad I'm there to help. She touches the baby's hair lightly, so as not to make him cry again. Then she turns off the TV and drags my father off to bed. I sit down in his chair with the baby.

In a few minutes, the warm milk and his tiredness puts the baby to sleep. I carry him into my parents' room, where they are already asleep. After I tuck him into his crib — my old crib — I go to the back of the house where I sleep.

It is too hot back here. I undress in the dark and fasten the curtain back so I will get all the air possible.

Then I lie down under just the sheet and turn on my tiny portable and tuck it under the pillow. I tell myself I mustn't go to sleep until I've turned it off. Then I look out of my window at the little square of stars, and I listen.

I listen until my room is as big as the whole ocean. I listen until I have forgotten the heat, the loneliness, the sad family, the big mean dead men who hate the young and the living. I listen until I am a beautiful girl dancing in the arms of a handsome Alex . . . dancing on the arch of the rainbow, without a care in the world.

Finally, I turn off the music slowly, letting it linger in my ears. I know one thing for sure, as I go to sleep smiling, I have to have music — or die.

THE GERANIUMS

by ROBERT CRUMB

CHARACTERS:

MRS. EDMONDS
STAN
ELAINE
STEVIE

Setting: The play takes place in a small kitchen. The kitchen is sparkling clean but a little the worse for wear. The legs of the old-fashioned table and chairs are scarred. The doors of the cupboards have many coats of paint, the outer layer cracking. The stove is a small apartment model and the refrigerator is yellowed with age. The walls could use a new coat of paint. The only bright spot in the room is a pot of geraniums in the window. The eye is immediately attracted by the bright green and red. The telephone rings.

MRS. EDMONDS: (From offstage, sleepily) Ye-e-es. (It rings again.) Yes, I'm coming. (As it rings for the third time, Mrs. Edmonds enters. She is a woman in early middle-age.

As she enters, she is tying the belt of her bathrobe. Her large, furry slippers flap as she walks. She picks up the telephone.) Hi, Ruth. I'm sure glad you didn't forget to call. I'll get that darned old alarm clock fixed some time. (She pauses.) Yes, I have to go to the market to work today, but I must get the children off to school first. (She pauses again, picking up a comb and combing her hair as she listens.) You ask me if it's worth it? Well, I really don't know, Ruth. I guess if they amount to something, it'll be worth it. I don't know, Ruth, I truly don't. (When she pauses again, her son Stan enters. He is a good-looking boy, about seventeen. He is dressed in blue jeans and a white T-shirt. He is carrying several books and reading another.)

STAN: (He speaks absently as he sits at the table and continues to read.) Morning, Mom.

MRS. EDMONDS: Morning, son. My geraniums? They're doing pretty well. A little peaked, maybe. I wonder if I forgot to water them yesterday. Well, Ruth, I have to get some breakfast started. Thanks for calling me. Goodbye. (She puts down the telephone and goes quickly to the stove and begins to prepare breakfast. She carries on her conversation as she works.) Studying, son?

STAN: Yes. Mr. Mallinger gave us a heck of an assignment yesterday. I thought I could get some of it read at the store, but I had too many shelves to stock.

MRS. EDMONDS: (Looking over her shoulder) How is the job?

STAN: It's okay. I got a little static from the boss yesterday. I missed my bus after school and was fifteen minutes late. Oh yes, I brought some stew meat. It's in the fridge.

MRS. EDMONDS: Good. Elaine can cook up some food for you tonight. (She walks to the door, left, through which Stan has entered, and calls.) Children! Time to get up! And no fighting about the bathroom. You hear me? (Two thumps are heard offstage followed by running footsteps. Mrs. Edmonds shakes her head.) Listen to that.

(Voices are added to the noise offstage.)

ELAINE: I got here first, darn it! You get out of here, Stevie!

STEVIE: I will not! I was here first. You're gonna get a punch right in the nose, Elaine!

MRS. EDMONDS: (As she goes back to the door) You children stop that! One of you get in that bathroom and get cleaned up. Your breakfast will be on in ten minutes. (She goes back to the stove, and offstage voices are heard again.)

ELAINE: I said GET OUT! (There are sounds of scuffling and pushing.)

STEVIE: I will not! (A door slams.)

ELAINE: Get OUT!

(Stevie races on stage. He is about twelve and sassy. He is dressed in his pajamas.)

STEVIE: Mom, she did it again. I was there first, honest. That big old horse just threw me out.

MRS. EDMONDS: (Patiently) Just cool off, son.

STEVIE: (As he paces back and forth in a fit of youthful anger) I'm gonna cool her off someday. She goes in there and stays all day, trying to comb that hair of hers.

MRS. EDMONDS: Girls have to take more time than boys. She's getting pretty, you know.

STEVIE: (Sitting by the table) That thing! She couldn't get pretty if she stayed in there for the rest of her life.

MRS. EDMONDS: You shouldn't talk about your sister that way.

STEVIE: She's no sister of mine! I wouldn't admit to anybody that she's my sister! Big Cow!

MRS. EDMONDS: (Her patience gone) That will be enough, Steven.

STEVIE: She's a—

MRS. EDMONDS: *That will be enough!*

STEVIE: Oh, okay but —

STAN: (Looking up from his books) Did you hear what Mom said, Steve? I'm going to rap you up the side of the head if you keep this up.

STEVIE: Are you gonna take sides too? Aw, come on, Stan, you know that Elaine's a pain!

STAN: I'm not siding with either one of you. You're both acting like a couple of kids.

STEVIE: Look who's talking!

STAN: (Starting to get up) You're really cruising for it today, aren't you, buster!

MRS. EDMONDS: Boys! (Stan sits.) Stevie, eat your breakfast now. You can dress afterwards.

STEVIE: Good. What have we got?

MRS. EDMONDS: (Coming to the table with a steaming bowl) It's oatmeal.

STEVIE: (Putting down the spoon) I ain't gonna eat it. I want cold cereal.

MRS. EDMONDS: (Putting down the bowl and going back to the stove) You are going to eat it. A boy needs some hot food to get him started for the day.

STEVIE: I ain't gonna eat it, Mom. I hate oatmeal almost as much as I hate Elaine.

MRS. EDMONDS: All right, I'll just put it back in the pot. (She comes back to the table and starts to pick up the bowl.) Besides there isn't any cold cereal. (That thought hits Stevie and he grabs the oatmeal before she can take it.)

STEVIE: Okay, I'll eat it. (He begins taking heaping spoons of sugar from the bowl. After the third, Stan reaches over and moves the sugar bowl away. Stevie gives him a disgusted look and starts to eat.)

MRS. EDMONDS: (As she brings Stan his oatmeal) Stan, your lunch and bus money is on the cupboard.

STAN: Thanks, Mom. (He starts to eat.)

MRS. EDMONDS: I don't know what we would do if you weren't bringing home wages. (She goes to the door again and calls off.) Elaine, I washed your pink dress. You wear that one today.

ELAINE: Oh, Mom, I won't wear that baby thing.

MRS. EDMONDS: You will wear that baby thing! Now, hurry up. I'm putting your breakfast on. (She walks back to the stove and begins to dish up another bowl of cereal.)

STEVIE: (Suddenly) Mom, can I have coffee?

MRS. EDMONDS: No, you can't. In a few years, maybe.

STEVIE: Why not? Stan drinks it.

MRS. EDMONDS: He's older.

STEVIE: That's all I ever hear around here. He's older. She's older. They're older!

MRS. EDMONDS: Which reminds me, Ruth said she saw you and some other boys smoking the other day.

STEVIE: (Alarmed) That's a lie!

MRS. EDMONDS: Ruth has no reason to lie to me. She said you were smoking in front of the Malt Shop.

STEVIE: The other guys were doing it. I wasn't!

MRS. EDMONDS: Anyway, if I catch you smoking, I'll take a big stick to you. You're not too old for that. I don't want a boy of mine to have his growth stunted.

STEVIE: Oh, Mom, it's lung cancer that it causes.

MRS. EDMONDS: That's worse. Whatever, let that be a warning. (Elaine sneaks in at that moment. She slides into the chair as if the table could conceal the fact that she is wearing a tight blue dress.)

ELAINE: Good morning, Mom.

MRS. EDMONDS: (Says without looking around) Don't "good morning" me. You get right in that bedroom and put on the pink dress!

ELAINE: Mom, I can't wear that old thing. It makes me look like a little girl. (She speaks with a whimper.)

MRS. EDMONDS: You mean you'd rather wear that dirty old thing you have on? Besides, that's not a fit dress to be wearing to school. Now, you get right back in there and change.

ELAINE: (With rising anger) Nobody wears those pink frilly things.

MRS. EDMONDS: Somebody is going to or they won't have any breakfast!

ELAINE: (Tenderly) Please, Mom, please?

MRS. EDMONDS: (Seeing through Elaine) Don't get all sugar-coated with me. You know what you have to do.

ELAINE: (Has a sudden thought) Mom, I'll cook real good tonight. I'll clean the house.

MRS. EDMONDS: You're going to do that anyway. Go in there and take off that dress. (She speaks as she moves in, standing over her with her hands on her hips.)

ELAINE: Please —

MRS. EDMONDS: Girl, I'm giving you just ten seconds to get in that bedroom!

ELAINE: (Jumps up. She is very angry.) I'd rather die than go to school in that silly thing. All the other girls are going to laugh their heads off.

STEVIE: (Looking up wickedly from his eating) You're not worried about the girls. You're worried about the boys.

ELAINE: Shut up, boy!

MRS. EDMONDS: You keep out of this, Stevie. (Giving him a little cuff) Now, Elaine, you heard what I said.

ELAINE: (In a tantrum) I won't! I won't! I won't!

MRS. EDMONDS: (Takes her by the arm and starts her for the door left. Elaine drags back.) I'm not going to argue with you anymore.

ELAINE: (Runs away and goes to Stan) Stan, tell Mom the girls don't wear those things anymore.

STAN: Now, Mother washed and ironed that dress for you.

ELAINE: But you wouldn't even look at a girl who wore a thing like that, would you?

STAN: (Trying to explain) You're only in the eighth grade, Elaine.

STEVIE: See! She's just interested in the boys!

ELAINE: (Screaming) Be quiet, you tattletail!

STEVIE: (Jumping up) I saw you with Johnny Carroll. Mom, I saw her with Johnny Carroll. They were holding hands in the noon movie! (He turns back to Elaine.) There! You call me a tattletale and I'll be one.

ELAINE: You brat! (She starts after him but he runs behind his mother.)

MRS. EDMONDS: Stevie, you get out of here and get your clothes on. (She pushes him through the door.) Now, Elaine, the nonsense is over.

ELAINE: (Stamps her foot) I just won't do it! How would you like to be laughed at?

MRS. EDMONDS: I've been laughed at many times, daughter. Besides, the people that do the laughing can't be very much anyway. It's a good dress. It's a clean dress. Remember how you liked it when we bought it at Sears?

ELAINE: That was so long ago. I was just a little girl then.

MRS. EDMONDS: (Sighs) It was just last year.

ELAINE: (Begins to cry) I just can't do it, Mother.

STAN: (Gets up and goes to her) Elaine, I'd go out with a girl who wore a dress like that. If she was a nice girl, a pretty girl like you.

ELAINE: (Leans against him) But Stan, it's so old-fashioned.

STAN: No, it isn't. You just think it's old-fashioned. Heck, girls are wearing everything these days. You just wear it like it's brand new.

MRS. EDMONDS: (Pleads) Listen to your big brother, Elaine, please.

ELAINE: (Tries to stop her sniffling) I'll do it this time, but I'll never wear it again. (She runs out, still sniffling.)

MRS. EDMONDS: Thank you, son. I don't know what I ever did to deserve those two.

STAN: They'll grow up, Mom. I guess I gave you a pretty hard time when I was that age.

MRS. EDMONDS: Never quite like that. They tire me out before the day begins.

STAN: Which reminds me, I have to get to school a little early. I have a conference with my counselor. (He takes his jacket from the hook by the door and starts to put it on.) We're going to talk about applying for scholarships. (He picks up his books.)

MRS. EDMONDS: Oh?

STAN: I don't know much about it yet. He thinks it's possible to get one at U.C.L.A. That would be good. I could stay at home and help you take care of things.

MRS. EDMONDS: (Turns away, speaking quietly) That would be nice, Stan. I would like that.

STAN: I'll try. So, goodbye, Mom. (He kisses her on the cheek.)

MRS. EDMONDS: Goodbye.

STAN: (As he goes to the door up center) I'll see you about nine tonight?

MRS. EDMONDS: Yes, if I make my connections. (He goes out the door. She suddenly remembers.) Stan, you forgot your lunch money. (She goes quickly to the cupboard and back to the door. He opens it as she reaches it.)

STAN: Thanks, Mom. See you. (As he goes out, Stevie charges in from the door, left.)

STEVIE: I gotta hurry, Mom.

MRS. EDMONDS: Here's your lunch money and an extra dime for a treat.

STEVIE: But, Mom, I have to buy a folder for geography class.

MRS. EDMONDS: You'll just have to use your treat money, then.

STEVIE: (Thinks) Maybe I can mooch. Okay, I'm off like a herd of turtles! (He gives her a big smack.)

MRS. EDMONDS: Stevie, would you promise your mother one thing?

STEVIE: Sure. What's that?

MRS. EDMONDS: Promise me you'll be nice to your sister?

STEVIE: Whew! Mom, I'd promise you anything, but I couldn't do that. She's a curse on the whole darned world.

MRS. EDMONDS: (Takes him gently by the shoulders) Please promise.

STEVIE: (Lowers his head. Then suddenly, brightly) Okay, if it means that much to you. I'll try to be nice to the old cow. (He goes out the door. She starts to pour a cup of coffee at the stove as the door flies open.) Hey, Mom, you forgot to say "Did you brush after eating?" (He dashes out and a little smile plays over her face. Once again she starts to pour her coffee as Elaine comes in, adorable in her pink dress.)

ELAINE: Here I am. The ugly duckling.

MRS. EDMONDS: You look beautiful, Elaine. So fresh and starched.

ELAINE: (Sits down at the table) Really, Mother!

MRS. EDMONDS: (Coming to the table) I want you to be a lady, Elaine. You are still a girl becoming a lady. Don't hurry it up too much. If only you knew how nice it was to be young.

ELAINE: (As if she can't believe it) Were you young once, Mother?

MRS. EDMONDS: (Smiles) Of course. You children forget that, don't you? Yes, I was. I suppose I felt the same as you. I couldn't wait to grow up either. You will grow up, Elaine, and you'll have children. Then you'll understand.

ELAINE: (Looks at her mother quietly. She takes a last sip of milk and jumps up.) I have to hurry off, Mom. Do you have my lunch money?

MRS. EDMONDS: (Sits at the table with her coffee) Yes, it's on the cupboard. There's an extra dime for a treat.

ELAINE: Thanks.

MRS. EDMONDS: Elaine, about that Carroll boy. He's a nice boy. I don't mind your holding hands with him.

ELAINE: (Brightly) Really, Mom?

MRS. EDMONDS: (Smiles again) I was young once too, remember.

ELAINE: Gee.

MRS. EDMONDS: (Shaking her head) You look so pretty. Off you go now.

ELAINE: Yes, I better hurry. Goodbye. (She kisses her.) Thank you. (She runs out. Mrs. Edmonds takes a sip of coffee. The door opens and Elaine runs in.)

ELAINE: (Crossing the room) I forgot my books. (She goes through the door, left, comes back out in a rush. As she reaches the door, up center, she pauses.) Mom, you're the greatest! (She is gone. Mrs. Edmonds takes another sip of coffee and glances absently at her geraniums. She utters a little cry. Getting up, she takes a pitcher from the cupboard, fills it with water and pours a bit in the geranium pot. She puts the pitcher down and touches the blossom of the plant. Slowing, in deep thought, she turns her head to the door through which her children have gone. She smiles, looks again at the flower. The phone rings. She goes quickly to it.)

MRS. EDMONDS: Oh, it's you, Ruth. Yes, yes, I'll remember. Surely, I got my geraniums off to school. (She laughs.) I mean I got the children off to school. You know, Ruth, what you asked me . . . yes, Ruth, it's worth it! (The curtain falls.)

I DON'T CARE WHAT *YOU* WANT!

by JANE SPRAGUE

It was seven o'clock in the morning. Linda was putting on her sister's green blouse. She let Linda wear it sometimes.

Carol came in from the bathroom. "What do you think you're doing?"

"Dressing. What does it look like?"

"I mean wearing my blouse. I'm going to wear it to work today. I just ironed it last night. You've got a lot of nerve, Linda!"

Carol looked awful, Linda thought. Her hair was all ratted and uncombed. She looked like something out of the Munster show.

"You let me wear it last week. It's the only thing that goes with my white skirt. And I have to wear the white skirt today because I'm in a program at school."

"Too bad. I need it for my green suit. I'm having lunch with the girls for Mary's farewell party. I need it, so take it off."

"I want to wear it, Carol." Linda made her voice sound sweet and young, and she smiled a little to soften Carol up.

"I don't care what *you* want! Take off that blouse right now! You're making me late."

"All *right*. Take it." Linda took off the blouse and threw it on the bed. Now what could she wear? Her pink blouse was too small and the blue one had a button missing. She would have to wear her old black sweater.

Linda dug into her dresser drawer for the sweater. She looked at Carol who was smoothing her hair into a nice arrangement that made her look prettier than she really was. Linda hated her sister. *She* was old enough to work, old enough to date and old enough to leave home. When Linda was old enough she would leave in a hurry. She wouldn't waste one day hanging around this old place.

Carol picked up her purse and gloves, gave her hair a final pat and left. She didn't even say good-bye.

Linda slammed the drawer and looked at the wrinkled sweater. She looked at the clock. No time to press it. Oh, it was going to be a bad day. Linda could feel it.

She put on the sweater and combed her hair. She found her books and went into the kitchen.

Only her father was sitting at the table. He was eating the big breakfast that was really his supper. He worked the late shift at the aircraft factory. Now he would go to bed and sleep all day. He was busy sopping up the gooey yellow egg with his toast. It made Linda feel sick to look at his plate. She couldn't stand soft eggs.

Linda went to the cupboard and got a big thick cup. She loved her coffee in it because it kept the liquid so warm. She walked over to the table, picked up the coffee pot and poured. Only a little trickle came out and that was full of coffee grounds.

"Oh, I wanted a cup of coffee," Linda said.

"Well, I don't care what *you* wanted. It's all gone."

"You could have saved me some. I put on a whole six cups. You can see I haven't got time to make more."

Linda felt like crying. Why did he have to drink it all?

"Carol had two cups, and your mother had one before she went to work. You're too young for coffee anyway."

He finished the eggs and drank the last of his coffee. Then he leaned back in his chair and stretched.

Linda mixed some powdered milk with water at the sink. She stirred it up and drank it down as if it were medicine. She took a cookie and started to eat it as she left the house with her books in her arm.

She let the door slam. He hated to hear it bang. Well, she hated not having her coffee. He could have saved some.

It was a cloudy morning. Linda had to walk ten blocks to school. She was late so she had to walk alone. The other kids were a block ahead of her.

When Linda got to her homeroom, there was a new teacher there. He said their regular teacher, Mr. Riley, had been in an auto accident. He wouldn't be back for the rest of the semester. This teacher would substitute for Mr. Riley. His name was Mr. Granger. It sounded like danger, he told the kids.

Linda looked at Mr. Granger carefully. She would have him for history class, too. He looked like her father, same size, same grey hair.

The teacher handed out some sign-up cards to the kids in homeroom.

"Aw, we already filled these out three times this semester." One boy threw his card down on his desk. "I don't want to fill that out."

Mr. Granger looked at him. "I don't care what *you* want. You fill it out!" Mr. Granger didn't yell but everybody heard him.

"I haven't got a pencil."

"Borrow one. And from now on bring one. I will check you every day. If you don't have one, I will do something about it."

There was a terrible silence in the room. Linda felt sick. The kids were used to Mr. Riley. This Granger was something else.

Linda bent over her card and looked at the information that it asked for. Name: Linda Nobody. Address: 390 Empty Avenue. Grade: Too young. Sex: Female and forgotten.

She filled the card out right, but in her mind those were the truest answers. Nobody was lower than a kid. How could she ever wait to grow up? Just once pretty soon, somebody had to care what she wanted, had to *care,* period.

Homeroom ended and Granger-Danger forgot to have the cards picked up. They didn't remind him the way they would have Mr. Riley. They just walked out and left the cards on the desks. He was probably too dumb to know that they had done it on purpose, just to make him more work.

When Linda's history period began, Mr. Granger looked tired. It was just before lunch. Linda was hungry.

Mr. Granger looked at his lesson plans and then spoke to the class.

"As you know, the ten-week report card comes in four weeks. Your projects on American history which you turned in last week before the accident, are not the kind of projects I like. Therefore, I will assign you new topics tomorrow.

"This project will give you most of the mark that I will put on your report card. You will do all the work on your own time in addition to your regular work."

"You mean the project we just finished isn't going to count?" The boy in the front row who always got "A's" dared to ask.

"That's what I said, isn't it? Use your ears."

Another good student said, "But I spent about twenty hours on that one."

"That's too bad. I'm not going to discuss it any more. I want a new set of projects."

"Well, I don't care what *you* want." Linda spoke out loud without knowing that he could hear her.

"What was that remark, young lady?" Mr. Granger moved over to Linda's row. Danger signals flashed from his eyes.

"Cool it, Linda." The boy in front of her whispered out of the side of his mouth.

But Linda couldn't stop now. "I said I don't care what *you* want. Nobody cares what *I* want. Why should I care about you? I did my project. I'm not going to do another one just because it isn't good enough for *you*. You're just a substitute anyway. Mr. Riley liked our projects."

Linda knew she had gone too far. Tears came to her eyes. She felt a hard lump in her throat from all the tears she needed to cry. She stood up to get out of the room.

"Nobody cares what *we* want. Nobody listens. Teachers don't listen . . . parents don't listen . . . even sisters don't listen."

Linda looked into Mr. Granger's shocked face. He looked mad, just like her father. Maybe he would hit her. She took a step back from her desk.

But he didn't hit her. He turned around and walked to his desk. Linda sat down in her seat and found a Kleenex in her purse. She had done it now. He'd have her suspended. She'd have to bring her father to school. He'd be mad to give up his sleep. *He'd* hit her all right.

The kids were all quiet. They watched Mr. Granger write a note. How fast teachers write when they're mad!

"All right. What's your name?"

"Linda Blake."

Mr. Granger filled in her name on his note and stapled it shut. He hit the stapler hard. The kids knew history was not going to be as much fun without Mr. Riley.

"Take this to the Counselor's Office."

Linda looked up. The Counselor's Office! Not the Girl's Vice-Principal. But counselors change your program, and they hate to do that after the semester starts. She didn't want any classes changed. But they wouldn't care what *she* wanted. You just couldn't win.

Linda took the note with her head down. Now that he had given her a break, she felt ashamed.

Down in the Counselor's Office, Mrs. Morrison took the note, gave Linda a chair and shut the door. She read the note slowly and then looked at Linda.

Here comes the lecture, Linda thought. The same old junk every time.

"Tell me what happened, Linda."

Linda looked up in surprise. No lecture! Mrs. Morrison was sitting back in her chair. Her hands were quiet. She was just going to listen! To Linda!

The whole idea was so wonderful to Linda that the tears began to come again. Mrs. Morrison bent down and opened a drawer in her desk. There was a big box of Kleenex! She took it out and put it on top of the desk.

"Help yourself," was all she said. She didn't smile either, as if Linda was being silly and babyish.

Linda took a tissue and with many tears told Mrs. Morrison about Mr. Granger and her father and her sister's green blouse. She told her how everybody kept saying, "I don't care what *you* want."

Mrs. Morrison listened and listened. Linda felt it was a relief just to talk to her, even if she didn't understand everything.

"And I don't know what made me talk to Mr. Granger like that. I guess it was having to do the project over again."

Mrs. Morrison picked up the note. "Mr. Granger says here that he felt he was too hard on you people. He's used to teaching in high school. He says he thinks it was partly his fault."

Linda was surprised again. "Well, that's nice of him. He was just acting like a teacher. I guess I just got off to a bad start with my sister and my father and everything. It all piled up on me at once."

"Linda, this happens to everybody. People do different things to get rid of that bad feeling. When my husband makes me mad, I scrub floors. The madder I am, the cleaner I scrub it. Of course, it always helps to have someone to talk to."

"That's just it. I don't have anyone to talk to . . . about anything. My mother works all day. She's tired when she gets home. My father sleeps all day and then watches the ball games and the fights on TV. My sister goes to night school or out on dates. Who has time to listen?" Linda's eyes filled with tears again.

"I do. That's what I'm here for Linda."

"You mean I could just come and tell you things once in a while? You're really not too busy?"

"Oh, I'll usually be doing some kind of paper work, but talking with students is much more fun."

Linda smiled. "I feel a lot better. But I guess I look awful."

"Your eyes are a little red, that's all. What do you want to do about Mr. Granger?"

"What do *I* want to do?" Linda had found someone who cared what *she* wanted. She felt like a person, at last. She felt as if she had a place in the world after all. Just a few words made her feel so much better.

"I think I can talk to him in the morning, Mrs. Morrison. I'll tell him I just took it out on him because I had a bad morning at home. If he understood enough to send me here instead of to the Vice-Principal, he'll understand how it happened. Don't you think so?"

"I'm sure he will," Mrs. Morrison smiled. "You have a good head on your shoulders, Linda."

"Thank you. I'm afraid it doesn't always work very well."

"Here's your pass. You'll have time to freshen up a little bit before the lunch bell rings. You can use the pass to get back into history tomorrow."

"Okay. I'll go now, then. Thanks again."

Linda walked down the empty hall. It wasn't going to be such a bad day, after all. Somebody had at least listened to her. It was amazing what a difference it made.

AT PEACE WITH THE WORLD

by **TED RICHARDS**

Greg was tense. His arms trembled as he forced his hands into the tightest fists a fourteen-year-old could make. He looked straight into Ken's face. Ken, fifteen and a shade taller, stared back.

Greg heard the shouts above the buzz from the crowd of kids gathered around the two of them on the school grounds.

"Why ain't he fighting?"

"Hey, you chicken!"

"Go on!"

His fists kept on tightening. How did he ever get into this mess, he wondered. There was no choice now. God, he wished someone would come and stop it in time. He looked across at Ken. How he hated that face! Ken had a silly half-grin. But Greg knew that grin. It was never meant as a smile. He knew about Ken — knew what that grin meant. Thoughts kept whirling in Greg's mind. Ken was tough. He had beat up more than one guy. He had walloped Gene Cook after school last year. And now, here Greg was facing Ken in a showdown. Darn, he wished someone would stop it.

"Fight 'em!"

"Chicken!"

He heard the shouts clearer now because for some reason most of the kids had quieted down — perhaps expecting something. He waited for Ken to say or do something. Ken only stared. Stared, and then came closer, closer. Now Ken's face seemed only inches away from Greg. Greg started to back away, but then caught himself. He kept his feet firm. Never. Not in front of all these kids. He could not let on that he would back off from anyone. Not even from Ken. Yet Greg knew inside just how scared he was. Why couldn't he look as cool as Ken? Why couldn't he be as brave and tough as Ken?

And why did he get mixed up in this, anyway? A few minutes before, he was just walking to sixth period at Newton Junior High. He had turned around to wave at Rudy Kemp. As he did so, he had bumped into someone and sent whoever it was sprawling to the floor. Greg had started to laugh at his own clumsiness. He had started to make an apology, but stopped short. The someone who got off the pavement had a strange smile of hate on his face. Greg knew that smile at once. It was Ken Harper. Four of Ken's buddies gathered around Greg. Soon a crowd of kids formed.

Greg knew he couldn't just bow out.

So here he was.

"Slug him, Ken!"

"Hey, chicken!"

The shouts kept up. Yet Greg's fists stayed tight more from anger than from getting ready for any fight. It came as something of a shock to him then, when he felt a hand push at his back, hard. The shove threw him right into Ken. Greg felt Ken's fist jar the side of his head. Greg knew what he had to do. He started flailing back at Ken, but all he hit were Ken's arms. Ken threw a few more punches. One caught Greg's cheek. Another slammed into his throat. Greg gasped and grabbed Ken in a bear hug. Both of them stumbled to the ground. Greg heard the shouts of the kids get louder as they hit the pavement. He felt his face grow hot. As they wrestled on the ground, Greg was surprised that he did not feel any hurt, even though he knew he had taken a few good blows. He just kept thinking — what a mess, what a mess.

Now, above the voices of the shouting crowd of kids, he heard a loud, "All right. All right. Knock it off. Break it up." Mr. Walker! Greg stiffened with fear. He felt two massive hands grab hold of both of his arms and fairly lift him off the ground.

"All right, everyone. The tardy bell rings in two minutes. Get to your classes. Now!" Greg was surprised at how fast everyone disappeared.

Now Ken and he and Mr. Walker stood alone.

"Ken," Mr. Walker said, "march over to my office — now!" Ken made a beeline for Mr. Walker's office.

Greg walked beside Mr. Walker. They headed toward his office too.

"What's your name?"

"Greg, sir. Greg Newell."

"Well, Greg, we do not put up with this kind of nonsense at Newton Junior High."

They continued walking without another word until they reached Mr. Walker's office.

"Just park yourself on this bench."

"Yes sir," Greg sighed. He slumped down on the bench.

Ken and Mr. Walker disappeared behind Mr. Walker's office door. Greg took long hard breaths. He rubbed the back of his neck. "Oh," he said aloud. He felt where Ken's blow had hit his cheek. His hand touched a few more sore spots. Now he figured he was really in for it. Ken Harper. The real tough of the school. He teamed up with the other hoods that hung around the park. God, he thought, that guy's tough. He'll really be after me now. How am I ever going to walk by that park without Ken or one of his buddies looking for another fight? Should he ask his Mom to drive him every day? God, that would really be the end of the world — a ninth-grade boy driving to school with his Mom. All these thoughts swam through his mind as he sat alone on the bench. Of all the stupid things to do! With so many guys in this school, he had to bump into tough Ken Harper. God, he thought, that guy looks like some kind of madman when he fights.

"Get in here!"

It was Mr. Walker. What a voice he had. Greg rose and walked across the waiting room to the door. He read the neatly spaced letters on the partly open door and hesitated.

MR. WALKER, VICE-PRINCIPAL

Did the voice come from in the office? he wondered.

"Come in! Come in!" the voice bellowed. No question where it came from now. Greg entered. He looked across the desk at Mr. Walker, who was seated and staring hard at Greg. Greg saw a chair and started toward it.

"Don't sit down unless I tell you to," Mr. Walker commanded. Greg stopped.

"Yes, sir."

Only now did he notice Ken standing just to his left, in front of Mr. Walker's desk. Ken's expression surprised Greg. He almost did not recognize him. The mean grin was gone. In its place Greg saw a limp, defeated look.

"Well, what's going on? What happened?" Mr. Walker thundered.

"I don't know, sir," said Greg. "It was just one of those things. We had some kind of misunderstanding, and we sort of got into a fight."

"Sort of got into a fight? If I got there any later we would have been picking up some pieces." Mr. Walker was shouting now.

So this was how Mr. Walker operated. Greg's heart pounded.

"Yes, sir" was all he said.

Mr. Walker boomed back at him: "What's the big idea? Do you think you are so good that you can start a fight any time you feel like it around here?"

Greg started to justify himself, then thought better of it. He knew the kind of game he had to play. He better go by the rules.

"No, sir" was all he said.

"Animals. That's what you are—two animals." Mr. Walker's eyes were aimed squarely at Greg.

For the first time Greg felt like crying. It was the way Mr. Walker looked at him. All the crazy things that had happened the last ten minutes seemed to crash down on him now. He knew Ken was watching. Greg imagined a picture of himself bawling, with Mr. Walker still staring at him. Then he imagined a picture of Ken going back to that darn smile of his as Greg bawled. Greg looked back at Mr. Walker, looked squarely at him. Not a tear came out. Not even the hint of one.

Greg was surprised at the softness in his own voice. "I'm sorry, sir. It was just one of those things. I'm sorry, sir."

"Sorry. Sorry." Mr. Walker mimicked. "One of you could have had a doctor or dentist bill for a hundred dollars. How would you like that?"

"I would not, sir."

"All right, Greg. How did it start? Who started it?"

"Well, it was just one of those things. You know, we were outside. Somehow we got shoved and started fighting. It was just foolish. You know."

"No, I do not know . . . Who started it?"

"Well, I guess we both did, sir."

Greg knew he was playing the game by the rules. He readied himself for another booming question from Mr. Walker, so he was surprised when Mr. Walker turned his gaze from Greg to Ken.

For the first time Mr. Walker stood up. He stared long at Ken without saying a word. Greg braced himself for another barrage of words. Instead he saw Mr. Walker's face soften. He was surprised at the slow, steady tones that came from Mr. Walker now. It reminded Greg of the time Mr. Walker had talked at assembly.

"Well, Ken, you know we have talked about your record here for a long time. I think we have given you more than your share of breaks. And look at this record." Here Mr. Walker shoved a large white card filled with handwriting toward Ken. His voice never changed from its soft even tones. Now Greg turned his gaze from Mr. Walker to Ken. He expected to see the same face he had grown to hate in the last ten minutes. Instead he saw Ken looking down at the floor; he did not seem to move a muscle. The soft tones kept coming from Mr. Walker, but now Greg only half listened. He was absorbed with looking at Ken.

"You know we expected more from you after my talk with your mother. You know how much she wants you to make it here at Newton, and then you pull a stunt like this."

Greg was not prepared for what happened next. While looking at Mr. Walker, Ken seemed to change into someone else. The snarling face was gone. And now. Was Greg seeing things? No, there it was. Ken's eyes were filling with tears. Would they overflow? Greg wondered. Mr. Walker kept on talking in that soothing tone, but Greg was still too absorbed to hear what was said. Now. A flood of tears poured from Ken's eyes and streaked down both cheeks. When this happened, Mr. Walker stopped talking. He sat down again and stared at Ken and then back at Greg. No one said a word. Ken put his hands to his cheeks and wiped the tears away. Then he spoke for the first time.

"I've tried, Mr. Walker, but sometimes, I just get mad. I'm sorry." Mr. Walker measured both boys again. "You know this is grounds for suspension."

Both boys nodded nervously. There was another pause. Mr. Walker finally spoke.

"Well, Ken, I will have to admit that you have kept out of a fight for almost a full year, but you know that's no excuse. I will tell both of you here and now that if this happens again, I'm suspending both of you. Understand?"

Both boys nodded in agreement.

"You each are to report to the detention room for the next ten days after school. Don't let me see either of you in here again. I want a handshake to show that this is over."

Both boys managed a weak, limp handshake. As they shook, Greg looked squarely at Ken. Ken's eyes avoided looking back.

When Greg got home, he decided against telling his mom or dad about the fight. He figured he would wait a week and then mention it to them in a casual way. That night when he went to bed, the events of the day kept whirling in his mind. Always he came back to the sight of Ken — the toughest boy he knew — crying. He soon drifted off to a quiet sleep.

The next day on his way to school Greg stopped to pick up Rudy. As they walked, Rudy asked what happened in Walker's office, but Greg told him no more than that he had ten days' detention after school. As they approached the park across from the school, Rudy seemed nervous. Greg felt a tug on his jacket.

"Look, Greg," Rudy said. "You know that Ken always hangs out here with his buddies. Why don't we walk on the other side of the street."

Greg was certain about his next move. "Why?" he said. "Nothing is going to happen."

They got to the park, and sure enough there was Ken with four of his buddies. Greg knew they were the ones that had surrounded him the day before. The one boy who had shouted "chicken" called out just as they walked by.

"Hey, Ken. There's that pigeon of yours. We going to get him?"

Greg kept walking, but he stared straight toward Ken. He saw Ken aim a look of disgust at the boy who had just shouted the question.

"Lay off, punk. Lay off," he said.

Greg kept on walking without missing a stride. His walk was confident. He smiled inside. He knew he was at peace with his world, and he was glad.

TIGERMAN

by JANE SPRAGUE

"Man, who is *that*?"

"I don't know, but he's Somebody!"

The two girls watched with bright eyes as the boy walked calmly past them in the hall.

"Look at his sharp shoes!"

"And, girl, look at that cool walk! He moves like a tiger!"

"Yeah, out on the prowl."

The boy turned the corner and smiled back at them, showing that he knew what they were thinking, even if he couldn't hear all the words. He knew how he made people feel.

After school the boy stood outside the main building on the opposite side of the street. He leaned his shoulder against a telephone pole. Somehow, it seemed as if he held up the pole instead of the pole holding him.

He folded his hard, round arms across his chest and watched the girls go by. As he waited he could hear them talk.

"There he is. Charlotte saw him in the hall today."

"Oooh, he's a tiger, man!"

Then the girls got quiet as they walked by.

"Sssh! He'll hear us!"

The girls tossed their heads and walked like tall young queens, full of pride and spirit. The boy didn't miss a thing. Then the girls began again.

"Oooh! He looked at *you*!"

"He looked at you, too. I saw him."

"He *is* a tiger, man!"

The boy thought, this is the way it's been with me ever since I was eleven. I don't have to do anything. It doesn't matter what I wear. I just look dangerous. People feel something when I'm around.

Before Danny Jackson had been at Cole Junior High for a week, the girls were calling him "Tigerman." And the boys were hating him, but with respect, the way they would hate a rattlesnake.

Danny knew that even his women teachers felt his power. The young ones blushed and didn't look him in the eye. And the old ones watched him when they thought he wasn't looking.

Tigerman knew that some day he was going to have to live up to the name "Tigerman."

Oh, well, he told himself. Why worry? I'll let the chicks fight over who's going to invite me to the Christmas dance. I'll take the first pretty one that asks me.

Charlotte Hammond was the one.

Charlotte was willowy and slim, with long silky black hair. She had a way of looking at you from under her dark brows that made the knees feel limp. Charlotte had been watching Tigerman for weeks. She was just waiting until she could invite him to the one "Ladies' Choice" dance of the year. She thought all the other junior high boys were creeps. Tigerman was the only *real* man in school, she said to her friends.

"Just you wait 'til you see him dance. I bet he is the best dancer in the whole school. UHmmmmmm! He's gonna really steal the scene. My Tigerman!"

Charlotte chose a blue silk dress to wear to the dance. She put a tiny Christmas star in her ebony hair and the blue dress was perfect with her lively face. She borrowed some "Tigress" perfume from her sister and Charlotte was ready for fun.

Tigerman wore a new suit cut in the newest style and fitted perfectly. The suit was black, his shirt was snowy white and his black shoes were the latest thing. His tie was made of red silk. An exciting after-shave lotion perfume came from him as he slammed the door of his house and headed for the Christmas dance.

When Tigerman went to Charlotte's house to pick her up, he felt great. He loved to dance and Charlotte was just the right height for him. Christmas vacation was just starting and he loved vacations. Who doesn't?

But when he saw Charlotte in her blue dress that just matched the lights on her Christmas tree, he knew that his time had come. Tonight Charlotte would find out and tomorrow everyone would know. Well, there was nothing to do but face it out.

They got to the dance in time for the band's first number. Tigerman took Charlotte in his strong arms and whirled her out to the center of the floor. A little murmur of excitement ran through the girls in the crowd as he let go of her and moved into the prancing, dancing beat of the latest step.

Charlotte was a match for him. She bent and moved and swayed to the fast beating rhythm. They made such a striking picture that no one else wanted to dance. The whole group of kids watched and smiled to see Tigerman's trim new shoes lightly move in perfect time, with Charlotte's tiny black pumps matching him step for step. Even the boys felt his charm and strength.

"Go, man, go!"

"Oh, girl, you met your match this time!"

"They've got *soul*, man!"

"So cool, that Tigerman!"

The band pulled to a crashing finish with the drums pounding. Tigerman stopped and looked at Charlotte. She was looking at him from under the graceful black wings of her brows. She made him feel like the bait in a trap instead of a tiger. Well, maybe he could tire her out some. At least he could put things off as long as possible.

Tigerman and Charlotte danced every dance. On the fast numbers they tried every step they knew; but they never outdanced each other. On the slow numbers, Tigerman's firm arm held Charlotte close and led her through the maze of dancers without a single bump or collision.

The other kids knew something was going on. They enjoyed themselves, but they kept an eye on Tigerman and his lady in blue. They were the kind of people you like to watch. They moved gracefully, alone or together. They were like movie stars. You couldn't help looking at them.

Finally it was the last dance. Tigerman looked over Charlotte's shoulder. The clock marked ten; she had to be home by eleven. An hour to go. Then it would be all over.

He made his voice sound peppy as if he had a great idea. "How about a hamburger or something?"

"No, thanks, Tiger. I think I'd rather just walk home with you . . . sort of slow and easy. Okay?" Charlotte leaned back in his arms to look up into his face.

"Sure, if that's what you want. I just thought you might be hungry."

"Oh, I am . . . but not for hamburgers!"

Tigerman felt a new kind of sweat begin to come on his forehead. He stalled for time. "Well, this dance is over. Before we leave I think I'd better go wash my face."

"I'll meet you right by the door, Tigerman." Charlotte went to get her things, and Tigerman left the gym and slipped into the boys' rest room. Nobody else was there.

He leaned over the sink and looked in the mirror.

"Well, *Tiger*, this is it. Your stripes are showing . . . all chicken yellow. Good thing it's dark outside. Maybe she won't notice."

Tigerman patted his hot face with cool water and enjoyed the refreshing feeling. Then he dried his face and hands and combed his hair. He straightened his tie and pulled his jacket into place.

He winked at himself in the mirror and liked the way it looked. He tipped his head back and stuck his chin in the air. Then he took a couple of steps back and strutted forward again to see how that looked.

"I look like a tiger . . . but I don't *feel* like a tiger! I don't even feel like a tough tom-cat. I feel mostly like a little ol' kitten."

But he tilted his head again, pushed the door wide open and strutted on out.

Charlotte was there waiting. Every hair was in place and she looked as cool as Christmas with the blue dress showing below a soft white cape.

"Come on, Tiger! I've been waitin' on you."

They walked out of the gym together, arm in arm. Out of the corner of his eye he could see kids turning to watch them. Some of them were across the street or even in cars. It seemed as if all of them had hung around just to see him leave with Charlotte.

You'd think we were leaving on a honeymoon or something, the way everybody acts, he thought. Actually, it's more like a funeral. Here lies the paper Tiger . . . all flattened out.

"What are you thinking about, Tigerman?" Charlotte's hand pressed his forearm gently through his coat sleeve. Her voice sounded like one of those babes in the TV commercials.

"Why, I was thinking about *you*, Charlotte. You are a good dancer, all right!"

"I'm glad you think so, Tiger. You are terrific. All the girls are so *jealous*. You really *should* have danced with *some* of them."

Tiger smiled and thought, how could I when you never let go of me even when I went to get a drink of water?

Charlotte talked on. "I've never had such a good time at a dance, Tigerman. In fact, this is the first time I've been to the Christmas dance."

A small hope began to burn in Tigerman's heart. Maybe she's not such a tigress after all. Maybe she looks and acts more than she really is . . . maybe her stripes are showing, too.

Tiger looked down on her as she paced along matching her steps to his longer ones. The curve of her cheek was so soft and young. She really was a beautiful little thing. And she was so alive!

Tiger pulled her arm through his and pulled her closer. He felt her tremble, and he knew his power was still with him.

"I had a wonderful time, too, Baby."

The Tigerman heard a soft sound as she caught her breath. She digs me! She really does! I say the word "Baby" and she shivers because it's *me* saying it to *her*. I'm a dream come true! How *about* that!

By the time they got to her front porch, the Tigerman had it all figured out.

"Well, Charlotte. It's been a cool evening. Really swingin'."

She turned to face him with her back to her front door and the porch light shining on her hair. Her eyes were wide and shining and her mouth was trembling just a little. He could see the fast beat of her heart in the little hollow place of her neck.

"I had a wonderful time, Tigerman." She could hardly speak his name.

Tigerman reached out and touched her soft, silky hair. He put his fingers into it and pulled her slowly to him, kissing her slowly and gently before letting her go.

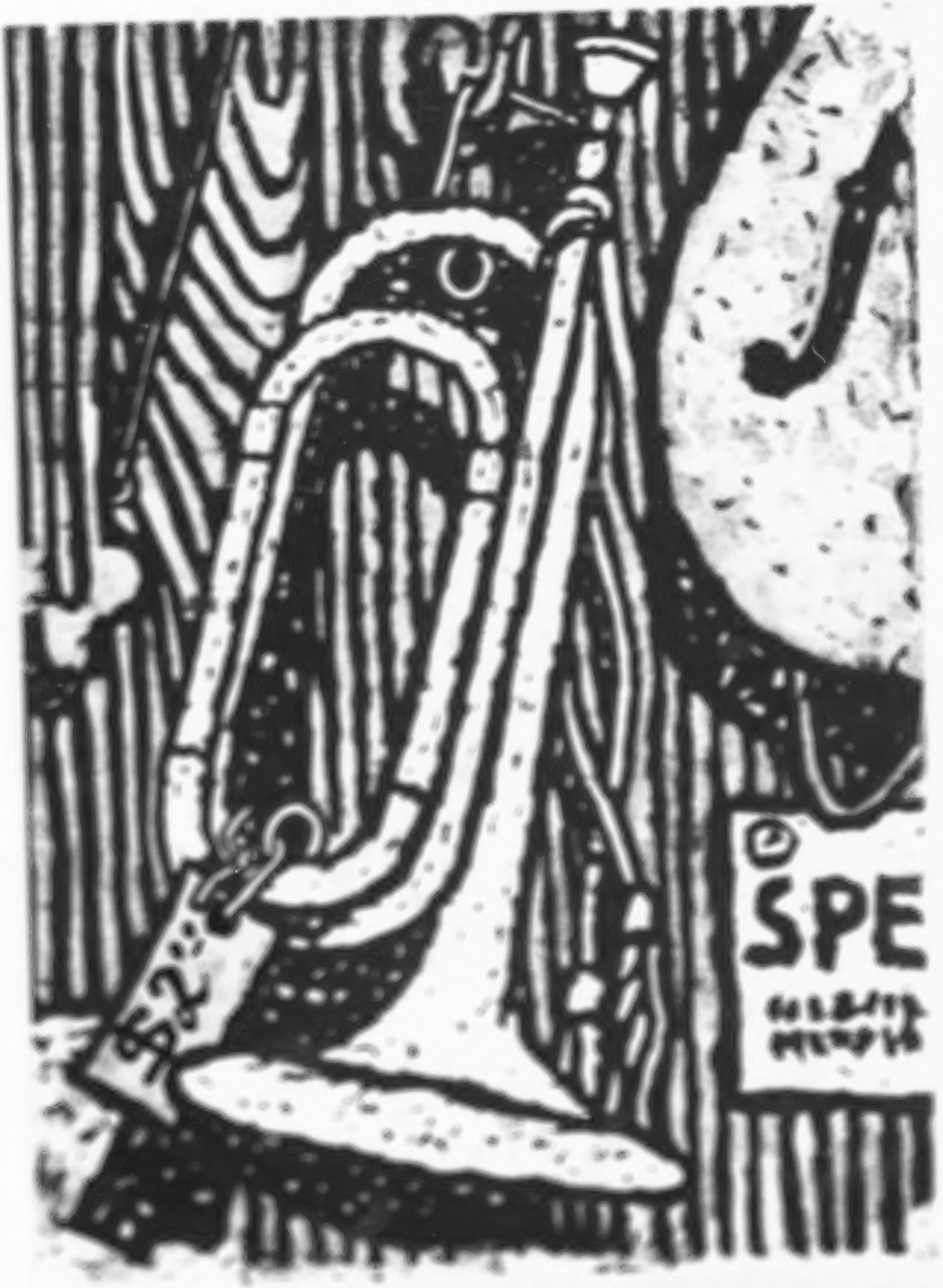
"Goodnight, Tiger-*ess*!"

He turned and leapt off the steps in one bound, leaving her breathless on the porch.

When he got around the corner, he stopped under a street light. He held out his hands stiffly in front of him and watched them tremble. He blew out his breath and took in air like a football player who has just had the wind knocked out of him. Then he did some fancy dance steps.

Finally, he crammed his hands in his pockets and went on walking, whistling like a tea kettle with a head full of steam.

You did it, Tiger! You followed a little kitten home and made her feel like a Tigress. She never noticed your stripes because she couldn't see through her own. Man, what a night! Well, I suppose I should have known . . . once a Tiger, always a Tiger! Man!


SPE
52

ELEVEN HAIKU

by JOHN DURHAM

Haiku is a Japanese form of poetry. The whole poem has seventeen syllables. Five syllables are in the first line, seven in the second line, and five in the third line. There is no rhyme.

Haiku tries to give quick little pictures. These pictures may say how humans feel about winter, or death, or love. Nature is usually a part of the poems. The poem often compares a bird or a cricket or the moon to a human being.

Think about each poem carefully. Each poem is short, but it may have a lot of meaning.

Quail explode up from
The field. So flies my quick heart
When I touch your hand.

South wind kisses my
Window: when did she leave me,
That lost girl of mine?

Autumn. The fields sleep.
Will winter rains paint the grass
Green again with hope?

Turn your face away,
Spring moon. My girl and I kiss
In the elm's shadow.

Gulls, the wind, and I,
The long beach, the far, cold sea:
Home is far away.

Old bugle in a shop,
Tarnished, bent: where lie the boys
You called to battle?

Small boy's lips and eyes:
Warm buds in sunlight; cool, blue
Stones in laughing water.

Dog snaps at his cat;
Cat scratches her flea: I count
The money I owe.

Apple seed, peach pit:
The baby sleeps and dreams late
This April morning.

River, river, run
Dark and smooth through the long night:
Life is gone too soon.

Dead grass: a cricket
Plays his thin song all autumn:
Does he mourn for spring?

SAM—THE SADDEST SITTER ON SUMMER STREET

by JANE SPRAGUE

My name is Sam, not Sam for Samuel but Sam for Samantha. In fact, it's Samantha Pearl, if you want to know the whole truth.

I was very happy until my big sister came back home to live with us. Her husband is in the army, lucky him. She is going to go to a secretary school while he is away.

The problem is that she brought her little brat with her. The brat's name is Belle, and she sure does ring the gong. Or maybe I only think so because I don't want to be a baby-sitter. I'm not the type.

You see, people don't call me Sam for nothin'. My mother did her best by naming me Samantha Pearl. Then, after I learned how to chin myself on the side of my playpen, they started to call me Sam. I was only eight months old at the time.

By the time I was in fourth grade, I could outrun, outjump, outbat, and outtackle any boy in the neighborhood. And now that I am in junior high, I hold the records for running, throwing, and climbing — boys' and girls' records, that is. Sam the Champ, that's what the kids call me.

Now you can guess that I figured dolls were a hang up when I was about two years old. Other girls could mess around with their little squawking dollies that drank magic milk and wet real water. Not for me. No, thank you.

And then, when those girls got old enough to dial the phone, they started to "baby-sit." Of course, it wouldn't have been so bad if they had earned money. But nobody pays *money* for girls to sit on their own relatives . . . excuse me, I mean sit *for* or *with* . . . or whatever they do. No, the grown-ups pay them by letting them stay up late the next night to watch the late, late, later show. Now isn't that *fun?*

I just don't dig that baby-sitting bit. Not at all. So you can imagine my joy when my sister arrived and set up her little monster in the room next to mine. My mother was running around finding pieces of furniture she should have sold for junk years ago. My father sat on the bed making horrible faces at the poor little creep. What could she do but laugh? Those faces were so *ugly*!

And then they gave me the good news. My mother let me have it.

"Sam, isn't she sweet? And you're going to be her baby-sitter this Saturday, all day."

"You're *kidding*!" I sat on the bed to show how shocked I was.

"No, I'm not. You're so dependable and *strong*. I know you'll get along just fine."

"No, I won't. I feel as weak as a wet noodle right now."

My mother has a wonderful way of not hearing you when she doesn't like what you're saying. She kept right on going.

"Your sister has to go to a wedding in Bakersfield. Dad and I have decided to take her up in the car instead of letting her go on the bus. It will be good for all of us to get away."

"It would be good for the baby, too," I said. "Fresh air and long rides are good for babies." Now where did I pick up that bit of information?

"Not this time." (My mother has a one-track mind.) "Little Belle has just had a long train ride. She is cutting teeth and she needs to get into a routine in her new home. She'll be much better off at home . . . with you."

I had news for her. No BABY could possibly be better off at home with *me*!

Saturday came around that week faster than it ever got there before. I wanted to be sick, but I'm so healthy I didn't know how to playact. I was scared I might act too sick and end up in the hospital or something.

My dear family was up at the crack of dawn. The wedding was going to be at eleven o'clock in the morning. It would take them two hours to get there, and two hours to get *back*! And in between would be a long, hard day of baby-sitting.

My sister, who is so smart it's disgusting, had the whole day written down for me. I looked at the paper.

"Bath! I'm not going to give that kid a bath!"

"Sure you are! She has a bath every morning. She loves it." (My sister lies, too. Did I mention that?)

"And, my gosh, you've got something down here for *every* minute of the day. What if she wants to eat when she's marked down to be sleeping?"

"She won't. She's used to the routine. She'll stick to it pretty close." (That's another lie, I bet.) "Don't worry," she said.

"Can she have a hamburger?" I always have a Saturday hamburger.

"No, girl. Are you crazy? All her baby foods are in the refrigerator. Her bottles are all ready. Just read the menu on the paper I taped over the sink."

"Man, I didn't know babies were so complicated. Are you sure she'll be all right?" I wasn't, I knew that.

"Sure, I'm sure! Just don't get her up until we leave. That way she won't miss us."

"What would she do if she missed you?"

"Well, she'd probably cry . . . a little."

"Oh." I felt very funny about that. She was lying again. The kid would probably cry a *lot*.

After they drove away, I went to see if she was awake. I opened the door very quietly and leaned over the crib.

There was a loud, high screech, like somebody breathing *in* on a mouth organ instead of *out*. Two bright eyes looked at me above a wide red mouth that smiled, showing two new teeth.

What do you say to babies? Well, I guess they're people. You must treat 'em like people.

"Hi," I said, making it sound as friendly as I could.

She kicked her feet and waved her arms and smiled. That must have been the right thing to say, all right.

"The list says we eat first." It was only fair to tell her what the program was going to be.

I put down the side of the crib and lifted her out. Ugh! I thought maybe we'd better get rid of her soggy pajamas before we began to reload.

We got that done, and I carried her into the kitchen to warm the bottle. I put her in her playpen, and then she started.

Her face turned red like a tomato, her mouth looked like she'd eaten sour lemon, and the howl that came out of her mouth would have scared a wild wolf. She missed her mother. Yep, she sure did. This was when she cried "a little."

At last the bottle was warm. I picked her up. She was probably just hungry. This would shut her up.

It didn't. The milk ran into her mouth and she choked. This made her redder than ever, and madder than ever, too.

"Aw, come on, Baby. Try it. It's great. Just what you need." I believe in using reason with kids.

She was yelling so loud she couldn't hear me.

Then I made my voice high and sweet, that fakey voice grown-ups use when they want you to eat something they wouldn't be caught dead eating themselves.

"Come on, Babykins. Drinkum little milkum. It tastes soooooooooooo good. Num . . . num . . . num!"

Her face was getting purple. Could a baby cry herself to death? I was getting scared.

All of a sudden she stopped yelling. A big burp came up. She smiled sweetly at me. I stuck the bottle in her mouth, and she went after it the way Batman goes after the Joker.

When she finished her breakfast, the list said, it was bath time. Two inches of water in the tub. Not too hot for my elbow. *My* elbow! What did my elbow have to do with it? The baby was having the bath, not me.

I had an awful time finding a ruler to measure the water with, but I finally got it two inches exactly. I had no idea you had to be so fussy about things like that.

I collected my victim and undressed her. She didn't miss anybody now. She was all smiles. I put her into the tub and waited for her to scream. She didn't. She just picked up both hands and slapped them in the water as hard as she could. Both of my eyes went blind.

"Hey, you! Cut that out now!"

I tried to wipe the water out of my eyes with my right hand, but I forgot I had just put soap on it. My eyes began to burn and smart.

I grabbed for a towel with my left hand and forgot to hang onto the baby. She slid down on her back and banged her head on the bottom of the tub. That did it. I got my eyes open just in time to see her mouth open for a real howl.

"Okay. Okay. You're all right. Come on and sit up."

I pulled her up again and tried to smile at her. I guess I looked pretty bad with my bloodshot eyes and all.

Anyway, I distracted her mind for a minute and she forgot why she was crying. I used the time to give her a quick treatment with the soap.

"Okay, kid. You've had it."

I put her on top of the Bathinette and started to dry her off. That was just like trying to dry a fish that hasn't quit swimming yet. Finally, I got her dressed and we were set for the next thing on the list.

Play time. That's all it said. Now what kind of a game can a little idiot like that play? I looked at her sitting there in her playpen. She had a death grip on a rattle in her left hand and a wooden block poked halfway down her throat with her right. Some game! But it seemed to make her happy, so I sat down on the couch to catch a little TV.

I was just getting interested in the Saturday morning cowboy movie when the taste of the rattle and the nice old block wore out. I checked the list and the clock. She was right on time. It was the lunch hour for her.

Chopped beets and rice pudding and a bottle of milk. That's not my idea of a cool lunch, but that's what she's supposed to have.

I got the beets warmed up and the pudding ready and put the bottle on to warm. I had a good feeling about this part of the day because after lunch she was supposed to take a two- or three-hour nap. Maybe the folks would be back before she woke up, and I could be free, FREE!

I put her in the high chair in the kitchen. I had a bib under her chin. I had fed her about half of the jar of chopped beets when she got even with me for that bang on the head during her bath.

She had been keeping all the beets in her mouth, tucked into her cheeks the way a squirrel keeps nuts. All of a sudden, she just blew the beets out at me, like a flame thrower. Phooey! There were beets in my eyes, all over my face, the high chair tray, the floor, my clothes . . . beets, red juicy bits of beets everywhere!

"Ooooooh! I just wish you were my kid for one minute. Now what did you do that for?"

"Goo-goo," was all she said, purple-red beets running down her chin.

It was goo all right. What a mess! But she enjoyed watching me spend fifteen minutes cleaning it up.

"Now, you little ding-dong Belle. You just better not try that with this pudding."

She didn't. She liked the pudding. But I guess it felt funny in her mouth. She kept licking her lips and spitting the pudding out so I had to scrape it off her face and spoon it into her mouth again. Babies! Who needs 'em?

When we got to the bottle, things were perfect. She drank most of the milk before she fell asleep in my arms. I must admit that full of food and sound asleep, she did look kind of cute. It was the only time, though.

The folks didn't get home that night until I had her all ready for bed. She was all smiles in her pink pajamas when her mother picked her up off my lap.

"Sam, she looks great! You must have taken real good care of her." My sister always looks at the bright side of things.

"No, I didn't. She bumped her head in the tub."

"Well, she looks all right. She has a hard head."

So have you, I thought, but I didn't say it. Instead, I confessed again.

"I didn't feed her enough, either. She spit out half the beets and wouldn't finish the rest."

"She ate the pudding and drank her milk, didn't she?"

"Only about two-thirds."

"Then she had enough to eat, Sam. You did fine. In fact, since you got along so well, I'm going to let you take care of her *every* weekend. I've found a weekend job for Mom and me. We'll need you to take care of Belle. Aren't you proud? I wouldn't leave her with just anyone, you know."

"You wouldn't?" I couldn't think why not. "*Every* weekend."

"Sure. Every weekend."

And that's how I got to be the saddest sitter on Summer Street . . . see?

THE FIGHT

by ROBERT J. FRANKLIN

Ken Cody did not want to fight with Wartnose Boggs. Ken was young for the B7 and was too little to fight anybody and win, let alone Wartnose.

Wartnose, whose real name was Jimmy, got the nickname from the big wart on his nose. He looked like he slept in his clothes and never washed. He failed B7 and was taking it over. All the seventh graders stayed away from him because he looked so mean.

The fight started when Ken Cody put his lunch sack on a table in the lunch area and went to buy a carton of milk. As he started back, he saw Wartnose take the lunch sack and walk away. At first he was not going to do anything about it because he was afraid of Wartnose, but Ken's girl, Mary Hale, saw what happened and said, "Kenny Cody, are you going to let that bully steal your lunch and not do something about it?"

Ken wished Mary would mind her own business, but he didn't want her to think he was a coward. Ken chased after Wartnose and said, "Hey, you took my lunch by mistake."

He said *by mistake* because he didn't want to make Wartnose angry.

Wartnose said, "It wasn't no mistake."

"Then give it back," Ken said.

Wartnose said, "You went off and left it, so losers, weepers."

Ken saw Mary watching to see what he would do and said, "In a pig's eye!"

"You calling me a pig?" Wartnose Boggs hissed through his crooked teeth. His eyes got like two slits of fire, and his head lowered like an angry bull ready to charge.

Ken was scared stiff, too scared to move or speak. Somebody yelled, "Fight!" and a crowd gathered around them in a few seconds. The watchers pushed and shoved to see what was going on, and they pushed Ken with such force that he fell against Wartnose and accidentally knocked him down.

"Attaboy, Ken," someone yelled, "knock him down again!"

"Give 'em room!" another voice called. A clearing formed like a magic circle around the two boys.

Wartnose sprang to his feet and started for Ken with a slow circling shuffle. Ken felt helpless. He didn't know anything about fighting. Wartnose looked big as an elephant about to trample him.

Ken didn't even know how to make a fist — that's how little he knew about fighting. He raised his hands to protect his face. The edges of his palms were toward Wartnose.

"Judo!" someone yelled. "Look out for a judo chop, Wartnose! It can kill a guy!"

Ken didn't know what the voices meant. He stood waiting for Wartnose to clobber him, but Wartnose suddenly stopped and backed off.

"No judo," Wartnose hissed. "Fight fair!" Some of the fire went out of his eyes.

Somebody laughed, "Wartnose is afraid of little Ken Cody!"

"I'll show you!" Wartnose screamed, and he charged at Ken, but before he could cross the small clearing, Coach Springer grabbed him by the collar and dangled him six inches off the ground at the end of one powerful arm. Ken found himself dangling at the end of the coach's other arm, and both boys were hauled to Vice-Principal Grissom's office.

Ken did not tell about his stolen lunch. He did not know why he didn't, but somehow he felt he should not.

"Fighting on the grounds is two swats," Mr. Grissom said.

Ken bent over and held his ankles as he was told. He had never been hit by a paddle. The stinging shock forced tears into his eyes, but he did not cry out.

Ken watched Wartnose take the same. But Wartnose got three swats because Mr. Grissom told him he had been in trouble before. Wartnose laughed after each swat. He looked at Ken with hate when it was over. Ken left the office ahead of Wartnose and walked bowlegged to his locker to get his books for his next class. His bottom stung so that he could hardly sit, and he thought about Wartnose: "Three swats and the guy just laughed about it. Boy! Wartnose was even tougher than the kids all said. Now what?" Ken knew that the look of hate meant Wartnose wasn't through with him.

Ken was right. After the period, in the crowded hall, Wartnose's buddy, Spit Johnson, sidled up to Ken and said, "Wartnose says to tell you he got it extra from the vice-principal today, and tomorrow he's gonna give it extra good to you."

He squirted a stream of spit through a gap in his two front teeth and continued, "He's gonna knock out all your teeth."

Mary Hale showed up at the wrong time again and overheard Spit's threat. Ken didn't know why Mary Hale made him want to show off, but he blurted out, "You tell that ugly Wartnose that my father was a commando in the war, and he taught me how to kill a man with my bare hands! You tell him I'll be waiting for him." Ken raised one open hand and tried to snarl as he had seen tough guys do on TV.

Spit's eyes opened wide with surprise. He never knew anyone who wanted to tangle with Wartnose Boggs, and Spit loved a good fight — as long as he wasn't in it. He hurried away like a happy undertaker to deliver Ken's challenge to Wartnose.

"Good for you!" Mary Hale said to Ken. "Don't let them bully you."

Ken did not feel good. He had a feeling of doom. His father had not been a commando. His father hadn't even been in the war.

All that night Ken had bad dreams about Wartnose Boggs's huge shoulders, powerful arms, and great big fists. All night long, Wartnose kept knocking out Ken's teeth. They kept growing in again like Jack's beanstalk, and Wartnose kept on knocking them out again. The dream was so real that Ken got up twice to look in the mirror to make sure his teeth were still there.

In the morning Ken tried to figure how he could stay home from school. He pushed his oatmeal back and forth in the bowl without tasting it. He tried to imagine what false teeth felt like. "Without my teeth, I might have to eat oatmeal mush the rest of my life," he thought.

"Ken, stop fooling with your breakfast," his mother scolded. "Hurry or you'll be late for school."

Ken only stared into the bowl and then looked sadly at his mother.

"Are you sick?" Mrs. Cody asked.

"I think so," Ken said.

His mother felt his cheeks and his forehead. "Nonsense," she said. "Hurry along now."

Ken said, "Ma, don't you need me to help you around the house today?"

Mrs. Cody looked surprised. "Since when have you ever helped me around the house?"

"Maybe I ought to clean up around the yard today. I promised Pa I'd mow the lawn and clear away the trash out back. You wouldn't want me to break a promise, would you?"

"Saturday is time enough for that," his mother said. She stopped to look at him carefully. "Young man, there's something wrong at school. I've never seen you try so hard to stay home. Out with it. What's wrong?"

Ken wanted to tell his mother everything as he did when he was little, but now he held back. After all, he was almost grown and it wouldn't look right for her to go charging to school to protect him. Everyone would think he was a sissy. This was a problem he had to face by himself.

All the way to school Ken watched for Wartnose Boggs. He wished he hadn't tried to sound so big about what he'd do to Wartnose. His legs felt weak, and his stomach didn't want to stay down.

Wartnose wasn't in any classes with Ken, and Ken tried to stay out of Wartnose's way. When the passing bells rang, Ken stayed until the last minute so that he wouldn't meet Wartnose in the halls; then he ran to his next class. At lunch time Ken hid out in the gym and tried to nibble his sandwich, but he was too nervous to eat. He avoided his own friends and the friends of Wartnose Boggs.

Ken was so scared all day long that he felt sick. Sooner or later he would have to meet Wartnose and have it out. Maybe Wartnose had his eyes on him all the time and was just choosing his own time and place. Maybe he was waiting to catch Ken after school on the way home.

As Ken neared his locker after the last class was out, he saw Spit Johnson waiting for him. Ken's heart sank. Spit was Wartnose's messenger of doom. Spit would tell him where Wartnose would be waiting for him. Ken wanted to turn and run the other way, but his feet kept going forward.

In a way, Ken felt relieved. He would rather take his beating and have it over with than go through another day of fear and worry. He still felt plenty scared when he walked up to Spit, but he tried not to show it.

Spit squirted through his teeth and looked odd. He hooked his thumbs in his pants' pockets and delivered his message. "Man! You sure are tough, ain't you?" Spit began.

"Tough enough," Ken said. He thought he might as well carry his bluff to the bitter end.

"Well, I got a message for you from Wartnose." Spit's voice seemed different somehow. "Wartnose says you're the toughest guy he ever met. He says you didn't even make a peep when Grissom swatted you. He says it ain't fair to fight you because he don't know judo." Spit looked disgusted. "As a matter of fact, Wartnose is so scared of you, he ditched school today so he wouldn't have to meet you."

Ken could not believe his ears. Wartnose afraid of *him*?

"As a matter of fact," Spit said again, "Wartnose ain't really much of a fighter. He only looks mean because of the wart on his nose and because he never washes. As a matter of fact," — Spit stopped to spit again — "Wartnose wants to be friends with you."

Ken was too surprised to speak. Spit thought the silence meant Ken was mad.

Spit said, "Well, how about it? Friends?"

Ken said, "Sure . . . it's okay with me. I ain't really got anything against Wartnose. Besides, it's too dangerous to fight with my hands. Somebody might get hurt bad."

Spit went away looking sad, maybe because there would be no fight.

Ken smiled to himself all the way home.

GUM

by JANE SPRAGUE

Neat flat sticks,
Wrapped in silver,
Covered with white sugar,
Fresh, foldable,
Delighting the tongue.

I think about you all day,
Forbidden stickiness that gives
My teeth and my soul
Such pleasure.

I save my round brown pennies.
If I have five, I have five sticks.
If I have only one or two,
I have big round pink lumps
Of bubblegum.

Either way, I chew and chew.
I grind up math that won't check,
Grammar that won't agree,
Stubborn basketballs,
And teachers with angry voices.

I chew and chew
Until life tastes sweet again
In my mouth.

GLORIA

by **JANE SPRAGUE**

Gloria's father started to yell and take off his heavy leather belt at the same time.

"No daughter of mine is going to run around late at night, do you hear? Your cheap sister found that out. Now you're going to learn it, too."

The belt was doubled in his big hand. He raised it. Then it fell and fell and fell and fell on the young girl in a heap on the narrow bed. She covered her head with her arms and hid her screams in the thin cotton blanket.

Finally, the beating was over. The belt hung limp from his hand.

"Get up and wash your face. If you think that was a beating, try being late again."

He reached out and dragged the weeping girl to her feet. She turned her face as far away from him as she could. Sometimes he finished off his anger with a hard slap across her face. She couldn't explain another black eye at school. She turned her face and choked back her sobs.

He shook her in his strong hands as if she were a rag doll.

"Look at me, you little tramp."

She turned her face a little toward him. Her eyes were red and full of tears.

She stared at his angry face, seeing no kindness or pity for her in his cold eyes.

"Now go wash and get to bed." He let go of her and slapped her with the flat of his hand across her face.

Even after Gloria was in bed, she couldn't stop crying and shaking. She felt cold, deep inside somewhere.

She huddled as far away from the center of the room as she could. She knew her father was getting ready to go to his night job.

Finally, he turned off the lamp and went out.

Gloria waited until she was sure he was gone. Then she let herself really cry. She cried and cried, as she had so many nights, until she fell asleep.

In the morning, she was almost ready to leave for school when the police came.

"Are you Gloria?"

"Yes."

"I'm afraid we have some bad news for you."

"Bad news? What is it?"

"Your father has had an accident."

"An accident?" Gloria's heart began to beat fast.

"He had a heart attack on the street. He was coming home from work. I'm afraid it's pretty bad." The policeman's voice was quiet and gentle.

Gloria sat down on the hard kitchen chair. "He's dead, isn't he?"

"I'm sorry, Miss."

Gloria sat there. His coffee cup was still on the drainboard of the sink. His hat hung on the hook by the door. Dead! No more beatings. And no chance ever to understand each other.

Gloria sat turning the clear glass salt shaker round and round on the plastic tablecloth.

Six weeks later, Gloria stood in a little room which smelled of fresh paint. The funeral was over. The furniture was sold or given away. The foster home was found.

And here she was, in this little clean room in her new home, a foster home. Gloria looked at the neat twin-size bed. The little desk was painted white like the bed. There were white curtains at the windows. The walls were a pale pink color. On the floor there were two large, fuzzy, pink rugs.

Gloria didn't want to leave this little room. It was the first time she ever had a room of her own. But she was supposed to help with the supper.

Gloria went out, closing the door after her. She went into the bright yellow kitchen. Something good was cooking in a big pot on the stove. Two little kids played in a playpen in the far corner of the kitchen.

"Hi, there. Everything put away, Gloria?"

Gloria jumped as the short, thick figure of her new foster mother came through the kitchen doorway.

"Oh, hi. Yes, everything is okay." Gloria's voice was weak.

"Good. I'm glad to have you, Gloria. This is going to work out great for all of us. The kids need a big sister, I need a helper, and you need a family. It's going to be fun." Mrs. Day smiled a warm, friendly smile at Gloria.

Gloria smiled back as much as she could. Things did look nice. If only there was just Mrs. Day and no *Mr.* Day to worry about.

What if he didn't like her? What if he wanted to send her back? What if he was mean?

Gloria found the dishes and set the table while she tried to forget about her foster father.

Then the kitchen door opened, and there he was!

"Hi, kids. Hi, Judy," he said to his wife. He put his lunch pail down near the sink. He turned to Gloria and walked over to the table. "Hello, you must be Gloria."

Did he notice the way she moved behind the table, to keep him at a distance? If he did, he didn't say anything. He just smiled at her, walked into the living room, turned on the TV, and sat down.

In two minutes, the two little boys were lifted out of their playpen. They walked and crawled to him as fast as they could. Gloria followed them.

By the time they got to him, he was watching the sports news show. The kids didn't let that bother them. They started to climb up on his lap.

Gloria knew what was coming. She went back to the kitchen as fast as she could. Why didn't Mrs. Day keep those kids away from him? Gloria's heart began to pound. Mrs. Day couldn't be so nice after all if she didn't protect her kids from that man.

Gloria sat down near the doorway. She was near enough to her room to get in there in a hurry if she needed to.

"Daddy, don't! Don't, Daddy!" The older boy yelled, and then to Gloria's surprise, he *giggled*! Screams of laughter came from the living room, along with the noise of the TV.

Gloria listened for a couple of minutes. The giggling and laughing went on. She got up to find out what they were doing.

She stayed in the kitchen and just looked into the living room. Mr. Day was still sitting in front of the TV. He had the two boys on his lap. Every once in a while, he would tickle one or the other in the ribs. They would wiggle and squirm and giggle like crazy. Mr. Day was hardly looking at the TV. When one of them laughed, he looked down at the kid. A warm light seemed to make his brown eyes even larger than they were.

Gloria felt tears come to her eyes. She knew that she wanted him to look at her that way. But that could never be. If your own father didn't like you, a foster father certainly couldn't.

"Okay, you guys," Mrs. Day said. "Come on, let's eat."

She moved forward, picked up the little one, and kissed his fat cheek. Mr. Day got up, holding the other boy in his left arm.

"Come on, Gloria, it's time to eat — smells good, too," Mr. Day said. He stood at the table and waited for her to sit down at her place at the table.

Suddenly, Gloria felt very hungry. It was simple food, but it tasted good. Maybe it was because Mrs. Day cooked it with love, Gloria thought.

After the meal was over and the dishes taken care of, they all sat down to watch the TV. Then Mr. Day went to the kitchen and got a can of beer. He came back and settled down in a big chair.

Now, here we go, thought Gloria. Her stomach did a flip-flop. That'll change his ways.

The smell of the beer made her think of her father. She glanced at the door of her room. She could make it quickly enough, if there was any trouble.

But Mr. Day sipped the beer, laughed at the TV, and finally carried one of the kids to bed. Mrs. Day carried the other one.

Gloria put her head against the soft, high back of her chair. The knots in her stomach slowly loosened. Maybe it was going to be all right. But she'd never know for sure until something made him mad.

About two months went by, before it happened. It was winter time. The air was cool and the days were growing shorter. Mr. Day had one food he loved to eat in the winter. It was soup made from fresh oysters. None of the rest of them liked it, but he thought it was wonderful. He called it oyster stew.

Mrs. Day tried to fix it for him whenever she could. It was very expensive. The oysters cost a lot, and she needed rich, creamy milk to make it the way he liked it.

One Saturday evening, Mrs. Day took the kids to visit her mother. Gloria was going to eat supper with Mr. Day. The oyster stew was steaming in a big kettle on the stove.

Mr. Day came in from working on his car. He cleaned off the grease and changed into clean slacks and an old, frayed T-shirt. Gloria could hear him humming in his room as he changed.

How funny to find out that men hum and sing! He sounded like a big bee. She smiled as she listened.

She checked the table to be sure everything was ready. This was the first time they had ever eaten alone this way. She wanted everything to be perfect.

Then she picked up a spoon from the top of the stove to stir the stew before she dished it up.

Somehow she caught the spoon on the side of the pan. All at once, the pan tipped over, and the boiling hot milk poured all over Gloria's left hand.

Gloria screamed. The pan crashed to the floor. Milky soup ran all over the floor, the oysters floating to a stop here and there.

Mr. Day came to the door. He stopped when he saw the mess. He looked mad.

Gloria forgot the pain in her hand. He would surely beat her now for messing up the kitchen, and especially for wasting his favorite soup.

She backed away from him, putting all the soupy floor she could between them. She held her burned left hand up by the wrist with her other hand. She watched him, waiting for him to unbuckle his belt. But instead, she saw the anger start to fade from his face. He saw the way she was holding her burned hand.

"Are you hurt, Gloria?" He grabbed a newspaper off the coffee table. He opened it and spread pieces of it in the soup, stepping forward on each dry sheet quickly. Gloria backed away, trying to get to the kitchen door.

"Gloria, stand still. Let me see your hand." He was there beside her. She waited with her eyes closed for the yelling to begin.

"Let me see it." He pulled her hand open gently and looked at it. "We're going to need some help to fix that up, but you'll be all right. Does it hurt?"

She looked up into his face. He wanted to know if it hurt! She searched those deep brown eyes. They were full of warmth. He looked at her the way he looked at his own children when they were hurt. He cared about her, too!

Now tears filled Gloria's eyes. "But I ruined the soup. I wanted it to be perfect. It's all gone now!"

Mr. Day opened the kitchen door. "Don't worry about that, Gloria. We can clean it up and make some more easy. It was just an accident. Come on now, let's get in the car and drive over to the clinic. That burn must hurt pretty bad."

Gloria let him take her out to the car. She got in and cried silent tears. She cried for the pain in her hand, but the pain in her heart was gone.

POEM

by DAREN STEVE WILEY

I am five
He is six
I am white
He is black
We are friends

I am twenty
He's twenty-one
I am white
He is black
We are enemies

I wish I were gray.

DEAR MARILYN

by JANE SPRAGUE

Period 2
Dear Marilyn,

The most wonderful thing has happened since I saw you in first period. That new boy, you know the one with the long hair, just asked if he could borrow my pencil. He's so good looking! I love the way his eyelashes curl. Have you noticed that?

Oh, Marilyn, I feel so good. I never felt so good before. Do you think it's happened because I wore lipstick today? I think I'll wear eye makeup tomorrow and my new skirt. Oh, do you think this is love? My insides feel like I'm on the top hill of a roller coaster.

His voice is so soft and sort of — Oh, Marilyn, he just returned the pencil. He's so darling! He *smiled* at me! He did. It was a little, slow crooked sort of smile. He's so *cute,* I can't stand it. What if he should wait for me after class?

Love,
Jan

Period 3
Dear Marilyn,

He did! He *waited* for me! He pretended like he was fixing his shoe, but he was waiting for *me*. Isn't it keen that we have all our classes together except gym, period one?

He is so tall, Marilyn. I always like tall boys, don't you? He carries his books in his right hand. He could have helped me down the stairs, but he didn't. Not quite. Oh, Marilyn, when I walk with him, just walk next to him, I feel so different. I want everybody to see. It's not at all like when I used to walk home from sixth grade with Harold Jenkins. I never felt anything at all, then.

Walking with someone you love is like walking on a cloud. I mean, you feel like you're floating. Have you ever felt that way, Marilyn?

I forgot to tell you. His name is Jeff Johnson.

Gotta do this old history test.
Jan

Period 4
Dear Marilyn,

Guess what? The most wonderful thing happened. Mr. Jacoby decided to change all our seats in science this period.

Jeff sits right next to me, at the *same* table! And he walked me to class again instead of going to his locker to get his science book. So we had to share my book.

Oh, Marilyn, I could hardly see, I was so excited. My hands got all sweaty. It was awful.

And then, once, when we were supposed to look at a diagram in the book, he moved over. He put his arm around the back of my chair. And my face got so hot! I don't know if *he* blushed. I couldn't bear to look at him and find out.

Right after that, he got called to the office, so I have the chance to write to you.

I'll write you a long note at lunch, while you have that dance rehearsal in gym.

Love,
Janice

Lunch time
Dear Marilyn,

I got your note. You are a good friend. I'm not a bit hungry, so I'll spend the whole time writing.

Did I tell you that while I sat next to him I found out exactly how he spells his name? It's Jeffrey Johnson. Isn't that a beautiful name? And both of us are J.J.! Isn't that keen?

And look! I matched our names, you know, counting off over and over — love, marriage, friendship, hate — for all the letters that don't match in our names.

~~Je~~ff~~re~~y ~~J~~oh~~n~~so~~n~~ = Friendship
~~J~~anic~~e~~ ~~Jern~~iga~~n~~ = Friendship

If I spelled my name Janyce, then the two *y's* in our two names would cancel out. That would make it come out "marriage" for both of them. But, of course, we're a little young for that. Ha! Ha!

Oh, Jeff is so cute. Don't you think so? I mean, if he liked you, wouldn't you like him, too?

Love is so strange, Marilyn. I can't think about clothes, and don't care about food. I'm not a single bit hungry. And I seem to have trouble breathing.

I can see why people write songs and poems about love. But if it feels like this in the beginning, how can they stand it when they're *engaged*? Or just about to have the wedding? I don't see how they do it.

I just want to sit here and dream. I keep trying to remember just how he sounded when he talked to me this morning. I want to remember his smile forever.

If I don't walk home with you after school today, don't be mad. If he asks me (he probably won't), I'll walk with Jeff. But you call me as soon as you think I've had time to get home, okay?

Love,
Janyce

Period 5
Dear Marilyn,

I just can't keep my mind on this stupid English. I'm supposed to be writing an essay about my future job. Mrs. Davidson wouldn't like it if I wrote on my *real* future job . . . girlfriend and wife.

But that's what I'm thinking about. I can see Jeff over there in the row by the window. He's staring at the front blackboard. I'm going to close my eyes and think his name, like I'm calling him in my mind. I'm going to see if he'll look over at me.

It worked! Marilyn, honest it did! I sat here for about two minutes and called his name over and over in my mind. Then I opened my eyes, and he was looking right at me!

Oh, I want to giggle. I feel so silly, so giggly, so wonderful. He was looking right *at* me!

Oh-oh. Mrs. Davidson is walking around, checking our papers. I'd better get going on that old essay. See ya'.

Love,
J.J.

Period 6
Dear Marilyn,

He waited for me again! He walked me to my locker so he knows where it is now. Then we walked to art class *outside* of the building. He said it was quieter outside, easier to talk.

We're going to see a film in art class, so I can't see to write anymore. I'll leave this note in your locker.

Love,
Janyce

Late at night
Dear Marilyn,

I heard the phone ring, but my mother wouldn't let me answer it. She probably told you I was doing my homework or some phony thing like that. She just wouldn't let me talk on the phone, that's all.

Parents just don't understand. Just because I was a little later than usual getting home, she got mad. She fussed and fussed at me.

I guess part of the reason she was so mad was because I was supposed to start the supper. But I couldn't just race home over the shortcuts, could I? I mean, walking with Jeff that way.

Of course, I didn't tell my mother I walked home with him. You know how mothers are about boys. They think that boys are all monsters or something. I mean, Jeff is a *nice* boy. Anybody can see that. She'd like him if she knew him.

Oh, Marilyn, he is wonderful. He bought me some ice cream from the truck outside of school. Then we walked along slowly under the trees.

Buying the ice cream made us later than the other kids. We had the whole street to ourselves. Imagine, me walking home from school with a boy! The very first time, really. I mean, when it *means* anything.

Now, I'm sitting here by the window. I'm writing on my lap. That's why the writing looks wobbly.

The stars are out and just a little bit of the moon. I feel so funny. I feel I'm on that roller coaster again, only this time I want to cry.

Oh, Marilyn. If this is what growing up is, then it's not going to be just *having* things and being able to *do* things. It's going to be feeling different ways, too. I mean, yesterday all I thought about was clothes and homework and eating and getting along with my family. Now, today, I'm thinking about Jeff and the stars and the flowers and the funny lump in my throat.

I think I'd better stop. Sorry about the phone call.

Love,
Janice

Period 1
Dear Marilyn,

I missed you this morning because my father woke us up late. He gave us all a ride to school. I just made it to homeroom.

Why does there have to be an assembly today so we can't sit together?

I cried for *hours* last night. My eyes look terrible today. I didn't dare put makeup on. I'm not very good at it, and my eyes are so swollen I knew I couldn't get it on right.

I dreamed about Jeff all night. We were running through a field of flowers. You know, like in those old romantic movies? I felt like a feather, floating along, holding Jeff's strong hand.

Twice during the night I woke up. And you know I *never* wake up, not even for fire engines going right by the house.

I couldn't eat a thing. I can hardly wait to see him. What if he didn't like me after all?

Love,
Jan

Period 2
Dear Marilyn,

He loves *me*! He *loves* me! I know it, even if he didn't say it. You know how I know? He gave me something . . . to keep!

Wait until you see. It's a heart on a chain. Not one of those clear plastic ones the boys always make. This one is made of that clay stuff they use in ceramic class. The kind you heat up to make it hard, you know?

It is blue and white with a tiny red spot on one side, like a drop of blood, he said. It is very modern and lovely. He told me he made it last year and saved it to give to the *right* girl.

Then, he put it around *my* neck. We were right there in the hall outside of math.

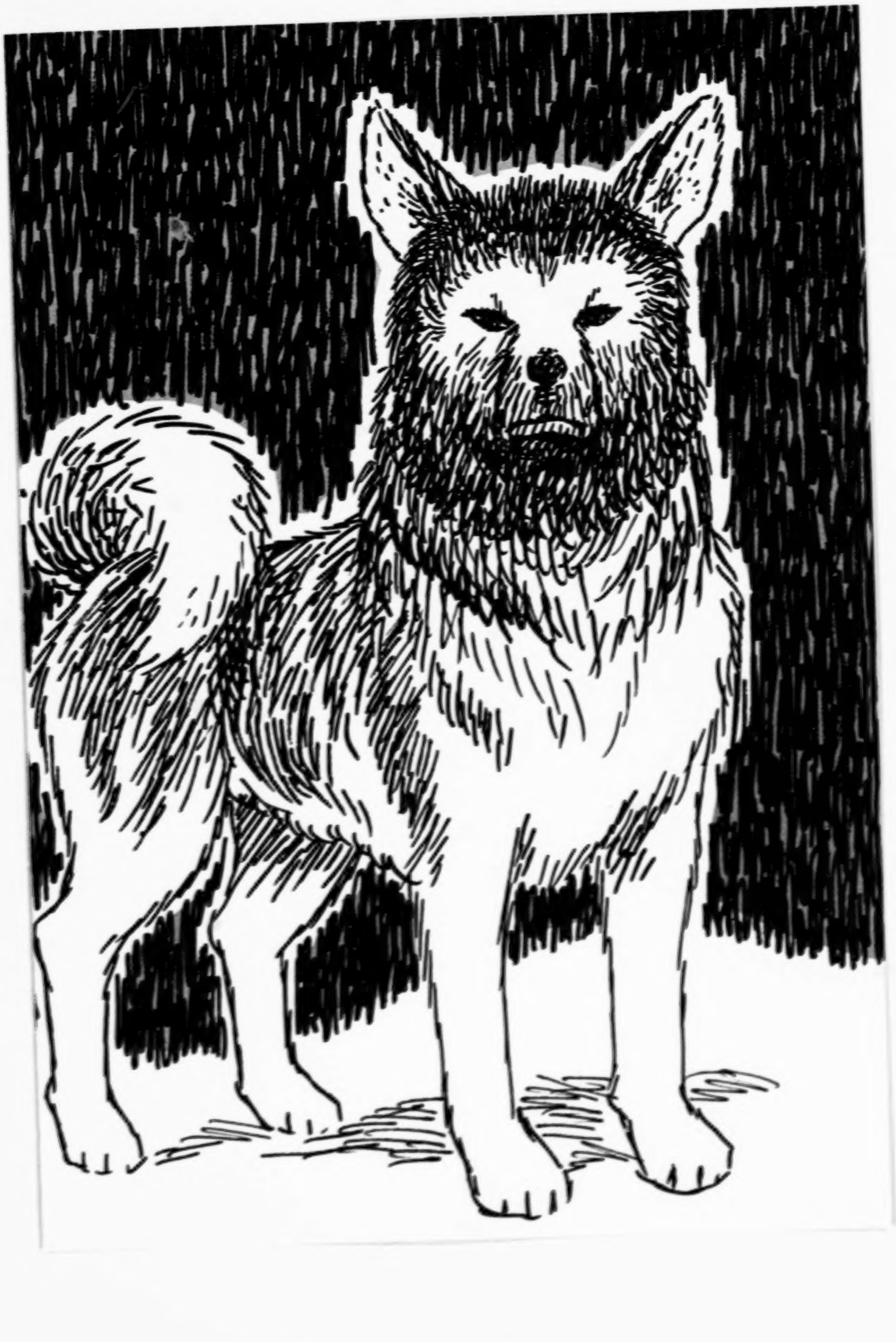
I'm sitting here writing to you. I keep touching my gift.

I can't believe it. He likes me. He wants *me* to be his girl.

Marilyn — he loves me!

Your best friend,
Janyce

ANIMALS



SNOW COUNTRY

by RICHARD HILL WILKINSON

Peter was shocked when he arrived home and found that his cabin had been broken into and his furs stolen. For the moment, however, he forgot about the furs and the fact that their theft meant almost complete loss of profit from his winter on the Beaver.

Atkim, the husky, who had been his companion and friend for three years, lay stretched out on the cabin floor. His gray fur was matted with blood.

He had been shot.

Peter dropped to his knees. As he did so, the great dog lifted its head. Its tail weakly thumped the floor.

A prayer of thanksgiving broke from the trapper's lips. He picked the animal up in his arms and carried him to the bunk.

Minutes later with boiling water, clean rags and his medical kit placed close by, Peter set to work. The bullet had entered at a downward slant. It had passed through and out just below the dog's shoulder.

"It's a good thing that you played possum and made that thief think you were dead," Peter said aloud. "Otherwise, he'd probably have shot you again."

Atkim thumped his tail and looked at his master with patient, trusting eyes. No whimper escaped his throat at the sting of the medicine Peter was applying.

Peter finished the bandaging and stepped back.

"It's a shame you can't talk, old fellow. Otherwise, you could tell me who the fur thief is. We could put a stop to this business for good."

As he pried open a can of beans, and put more water on to boil, Peter's anger grew. There had been reports this year all up and down the Beaver about the mysterious thief. He had stolen from many cabins while the trappers were out on their lines.

He had made off with furs totalling into the thousands of dollars.

Peter sat down to his supper. The more he thought, the madder he became.

"If you could only talk," he said again to the great shaggy beast who was watching him from the bunk. "Then we could certainly fix that thief."

Atkim thumped his tail and made a noise in his throat that was halfway between a yelp and a bark. Peter looked at him and into his mind there flashed a wonderful idea.

"By golly!" he exclaimed out loud. He brought his fist down on the table with a blow that set the dishes to rattling.

Two weeks later Peter packed most of his belongings. He put them into the light sled that he used for traveling. He harnessed Atkim to the pull rope and set off toward the south.

The great dog was now completely well and strong. He pulled the sled with an ease and speed that soon had the young trapper puffing in an effort to keep up.

That night they camped near the Big Falls. The next day, shortly after noon, they reached the Smoke Creek trading post.

Peter went at once to the headquarters of the mounted police.

Constable Ray McDonald listened gravely while Peter told his story.

"You're not the only one from whom furs have been stolen," the officer said. "We've had a lot of complaints, but none in which a dog was shot."

The constable rose and crossed to the window.

"Frankly," he continued, "we haven't had much success in picking up clues that might lead to the thief's capture. We'll get him sooner or later. We always do. However, that doesn't bring your furs back, does it?"

The officer turned and faced Peter. "It's a pity your dog can't talk."

Peter's teeth flashed whitely.

"Constable McDonald, perhaps Atkim can be taught to talk. I have a wonderful idea. Perhaps we can get all the furs back, and catch the thief as well."

For five minutes the young trapper talked excitedly. Slowly a look of amazement, then of excitement, appeared on the officer's face.

"By golly, Pete, it might work at that! There's certainly no harm in trying." He looked at Peter soberly. "The experiment might take weeks."

Peter shrugged. "To me that means nothing. My furs are gone. The season is nearly over. I have nothing but time."

"Then we'll try it," said the officer.

The next day Peter, with Atkim at his heels as usual, visited the trading post. He talked with Ahearn, the factor. He also exchanged greetings with other trappers who arrived from time to time during the morning.

All of the trappers had the same story to tell. Some had been robbed of their entire winter's catch. Others had managed to save a few valuable furs. They had taken the precaution to hide them because they'd heard of the mysterious thief.

Two days passed. Most of the trappers from the Beaver territory were in. Only two remained to report: an Indian named John Blackfeather, and another man named Jim Murphy.

Peter knew them both. He had no reason to distrust either.

Jim Murphy reported in that morning. Peter saw him coming through the trading post window. Across the street Constable McDonald had appeared in the police headquarters' doorway.

Just at this moment Ahearn, the factor, opened the post door. Atkim, who had been lying at Peter's feet, rose and growled. The hair was standing up along his back.

Before Peter could stop him, the huge dog was through the door. With a snarl, he hurled himself upon the unsuspecting Mr. Murphy. Murphy shrieked in terror.

From across the street Constable McDonald came on the run. But Peter was ahead of him.

"So!" Peter cried. "It is you who stole the furs, James Murphy! You are the thief, eh?"

Murphy's terror-stricken eyes stared helplessly at the trapper.

"Call him off, Pete! He'll kill me! You'll get your furs back! All of them!"

"Maybe I should let him kill you," Peter said. "You tried to kill him."

Peter spoke a sharp command, and Atkim backed away from Murphy, still snarling.

Peter turned to Constable McDonald. "As you can see, Atkim is well-trained. Never before has he attacked a man without my command." Peter smiled. "I have trained him to talk, you see."

McDonald reached into his pocket and produced a pair of handcuffs. He started toward Murphy, who was still trembling.

FOUR ANIMAL HEROES

by **HELEN B. WALTERS**

A DOLPHIN LED SHIPS TO SAFETY

Pelorus Jack was only a dolphin, yet he understood the dangerous current flowing between the islands off the coast of New Zealand. Nobody knew where he came from or where he made his home, if he had one. Sailors named him because they guessed that he came from the Pelorus Sound.

Travelers lucky enough to see him never forgot him. He was larger than most dolphins, probably fourteen feet long. His skin appeared blue at times, and purple with yellow patches at other times. Yet he had the usual brown lines over his back and sides. Jack also bore scratches which may have been battle scars from fighting sharks. Possibly he had been gashed by ships, although captains tried not to hit a dolphin since that was bad luck.

Pelorus Jack started his climb to fame in 1871. A schooner from Boston was trying to steer through the bends of French Pass where hidden rocks often sank ships. The current was wild, and rain made it hard to see. The crew wondered if they would reach the city of Sydney or end at the bottom of the channel. Then suddenly a big dolphin appeared. It jumped and played in front of the ship. Slowly the captain understood that the big dolphin was showing them the deep water. The captain followed the dolphin and hoped for the best. The ship arrived safely in port.

This was the beginning of Jack's career as a pilot. He became so famous that tourists went to the South Seas hoping to see him in action. Sailors nearing French Pass watched anxiously for him to appear before they dared tackle the dangerous waters. When finally his big body jumped up beside the ship, everybody cheered.

Pelorus Jack was always alone. He seemed always to be waiting for a ship to appear. Perhaps he listened for the sound of a propeller; maybe from some depth he saw the shadow of a hull. Sometimes he darted out to sea to meet a ship. Then he would swim first on one side then on the other, like a big dog herding sheep. When the ship neared the dangerous waters, Jack played back and forth under the bow as though to offer his services as pilot. After a time he darted to take a position like that of a pilot tug. Here he swam in full view. Whether the ship was going into port or out of it, he knew the way; and captains learned to trust him.

One day after Jack had been piloting ships for many years, a drunken passenger on a ship named *Penguin* fired a gun that made a bad cut on the dolphin. The crew were so angry that they wanted to toss the man overboard. Jack disappeared into deep water and was not seen again for two weeks. Then he took up his old job, but never again would he guide the ***Penguin***. He seemed to recognize the ship and avoid it. Its crew grew afraid and claimed the ship was jinxed. They refused to sign on for work, and the ship eventually ended on a reef and sank.

Pelorus Jack was so well known that the City Council at Wellington, New Zealand, passed a law protecting him. He was never to be hurt or bothered in any way.

Jack guided ships for over forty years. Then came the day he did not appear. Seamen watched in vain. He never showed up again. Nobody knows whether he died of old age or whether he was killed by some hunter for sport.

A HORSE, THE LONE SURVIVOR OF A BATTLE

Comanche was not very handsome and would never have won a blue ribbon in a horse show. His body was too stocky, his neck too thick, his legs too short. And he was clumsy. But he had a big heart filled with courage and endurance. He had something more in his favor. He was smart.

He was a big horse with a high, broad back and could claim that his ancestors came from Spain. His master, Captain Myles W. Keogh, bought him from the government for ninety dollars.

It did not take the animal long to become the lead horse of Company "I" in General Custer's 7th Cavalry.

One May morning in 1876 when the band of Fort Lincoln played the battle song, Comanche carried his master on high steps. The animal had been at the Fort for three years and had gone through many battles. There was no hint that this day's march would end in death for all the brave soldiers riding out with flags flying.

After dividing his men, the General and Captain Keogh rode cautiously toward the Little Big Horn River where they felt the Indians would make a stand. Custer did not know the country nor did he suspect that his little group was outnumbered ten to one by Indians. The soldiers rode boldly along roads and paths while Indians ran without noise through the woods, led by reports from the scouts.

The famous general was brave and well known, but he did not understand the wisdom of his enemy. The Indians had joined their forces under such clever chiefs as Crow King, Black Moon, and the greatest of all, Crazy Horse. Silently the Indians surrounded the soldiers. At the command of Crazy Horse, they attacked the blue ranks of cavalry. Custer's men were almost "sitting ducks" for arrows shot from ambush. As the Indians closed in, the soldiers found they could not fight war clubs, tomahawks, and scalping knives. The battle was over in an hour.

When a rescue force rode up, they found the blond Custer and his 200 men lying over the field, all dead. Officers called in all directions hoping for at least one survivor to tell what had happened. There was no answer. As the bugler started to play taps for those killed in the massacre, there was a shout from a ravine. All turned to see one of their men coming from a scouting trip. He was leading a blood-spattered horse that limped along with its saddle hanging under its belly.

"Comanche!" cried the men who knew well the horse of Captain Keogh.

The troop doctor found that the animal was bleeding from gunshot wounds and the gashes of arrows.

"Shall we shoot him?" asked an officer fingering his pistol. Hopelessly injured horses were put out of their pain with a quick shot.

"Not yet," said the doctor.

The wounds were dressed and the horse led back to camp. It took a year for him to get better. He was treated as a hero. On pay days, the soldiers shared their food and drink with the old horse, and he learned to drink and eat whatever they did. He became the pet of the town and was allowed to eat grass or flowers from whatever garden caught his eye. Often at the sound of a trumpet he would break loose and gallop to his old place at the head of his company.

By order of the commanding officer, he was never ridden again. In parades he was led with an empty saddle draped in mourning as a symbol of Custer's Last Stand. Comanche lived to be thirty-one years old. When he died, his body was mounted and presented to the University of Kansas.

A DOG HELPER AT THE SOUTH POLE

He was part husky, part St. Bernard, and part German shepherd. This combination of ancestors was not an accident. Chinook had been born to be a great sled dog. From his husky blood he got power in his shoulders to pull heavy loads. His St. Bernard ancestors gave him patience and endurance in bitter cold weather. The German shepherd ancestors added high intelligence. So his owner expected him to be a leader.

Of course, Chinook could not speak words, but he understood certain words. From his lessons he knew that the command "How-eh! How-eh! meant go to the right; "Ash-oo! Ash-oo!" meant go to the left. "Huk! Huk!" was the call to start forward or to keep going. His master, Arthur Walden, was an expert trainer. He was proud of Chinook and waited for a chance to prove that the dog was the very best.

That chance came in 1929. Admiral Byrd asked Walden to pick some good dogs to work with him in Antarctica. Naturally Walden picked Chinook to lead a team of forty animals. They landed when the weather was far below zero. At once the dog teams were put to work carrying food and equipment or rescuing men overcome by the cold. Sometimes the dogs were hitched in single file for making speed. At other times it was necessary to hitch them fanlike so that each could pull alone in breaking free the runners that had frozen to the ice.

Life at the South Pole was rugged even for young dogs, and by dog ages, Chinook was middle-aged, since he was nearing his twelfth birthday. He struggled to lead his team over jagged hills of ice or across smooth ice as slick as polished flooring. Often he had to go around a deep crevasse, where one wrong step might send all to death. These were the toughest hauling jobs to do.

As the weeks went by, it was plain to his master that the great Chinook would have to be retired. It was a sad day when a younger dog was hitched up as leader. The old dog watched, seeming to know that he was through.

That night he settled down in his usual quarters near his master. After Walden had gone to sleep, he was awakened by the feel of Chinook's paw on his cheek, as if the animal wanted something. The master spoke to the dog then turned over and went to sleep. Again he was awakened by the soft paw. Again he talked to the dog, wondered what the dog wanted, then went to sleep, as the dawn would bring more work.

The next morning Chinook was missing. Though all the men called and searched, the dog was never found. But the master understood. Chinook had used the only way he knew to tell the man he loved, "goodbye." Chinook had followed the custom of old sled dogs whose hearts are broken; he had wandered away to die alone.

So famous was this dog hero of the South Pole that a highway in New Hampshire was named after him. The people of New Hampshire will never forget the dog who served an admiral at the South Pole.

A RUNT SAVED A TOWN

Although Togo's ancestors were the Siberian breed noted for speed and endurance as sled dogs, he turned out to be a little gray runt. The owner of the kennels where he was born did not want to be bothered with him, so the owner gave him away as a pet. However, the pup had a mind of his own. He did not want to live a soft life. In his blood was a love of excitement, of mushing over snows. So at his first chance, he ran away and showed up at his home kennel.

The owner, Leonhard Seppala, was first surprised, then puzzled. Perhaps this runt wasn't as hopeless as he appeared. After thinking it over, Seppala decided to take a chance on the little fellow.

One day, when the pup was eight months old, the master needed a dog to replace one that was sick on his team. There was no other except the runt, so he was put into harness. To the man's surprise, the pup covered seventy-five miles in one day.

"Well!" cried Seppala, "maybe you're not hopeless after all."

It was not long before the runt was given the position of team leader. He did so well that his master decided the dog should have a worthy name. He could think of nothing better than Togo, the name of the little Japanese admiral who had won the war against Russia.

"Both of you are small," he told his dog, "but both of you are leaders. Maybe someday you'll be a hero, too."

With training, Togo became a better leader. He led his team away from other dogs that might have caused a fight. He kept his lead line tight and never lost his course in storms. Years passed. Togo's team won racing honors.

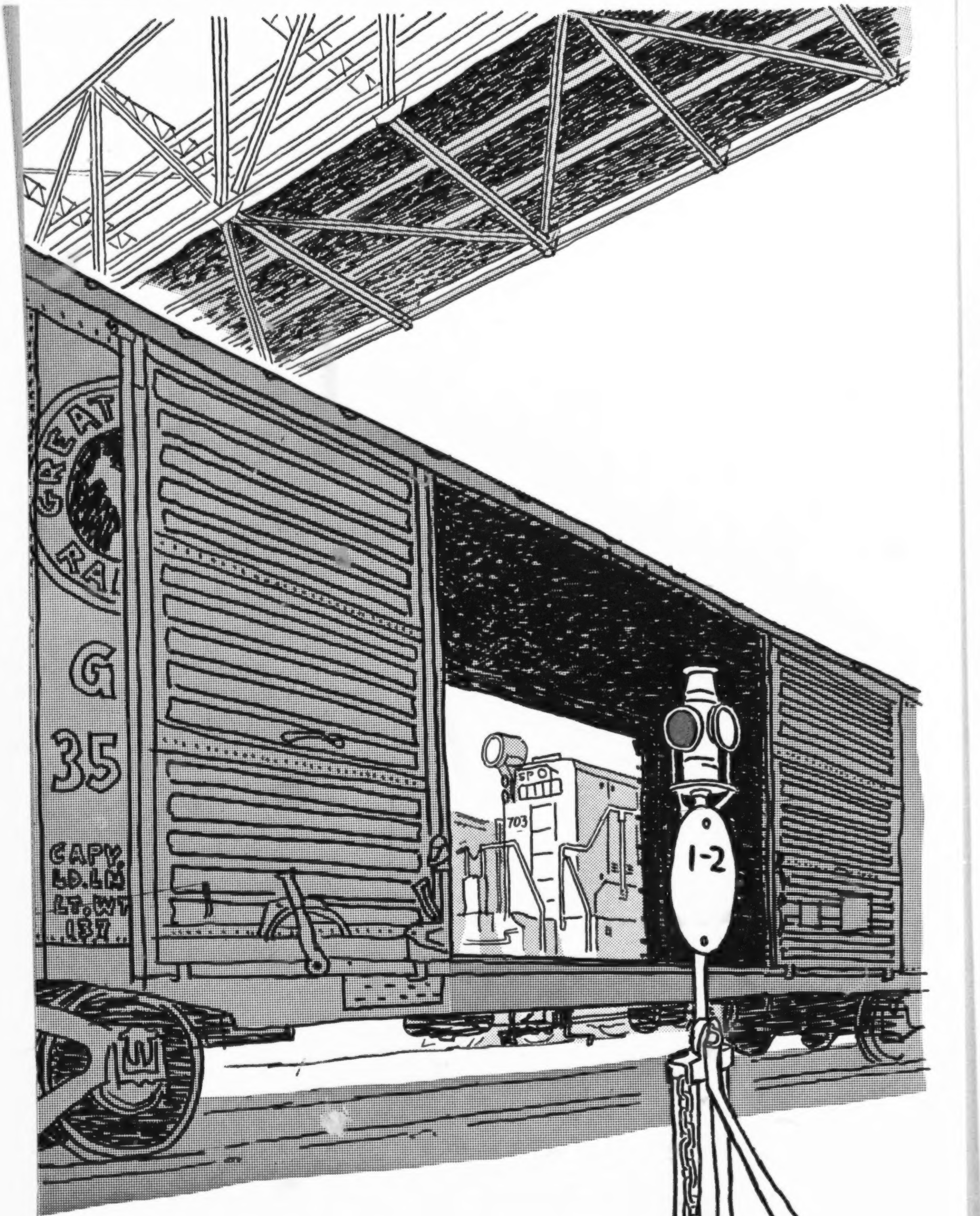
When the dog was getting almost too old for the hard life of pulling a sled, he had his greatest test. Diphtheria struck Nome, Alaska. Children were dying for lack of medicine. Serum had been promised from another town, but nobody could go after it. A terrible storm had closed all roads. Airplanes could not take off. The only chance was a dog team, and that chance was slim. Townspeople shook their heads in doubt. Could animals travel 675 miles in such a storm? To make the chances better, it was arranged for two teams to meet half way. Then came a search for the best driver and the most sure-footed animals. The town picked Seppala, who, of course, chose Togo to lead his team.

The dogs were hitched up and worried citizens watched them set out into the storm. Although the thermometer dropped to far below zero, Togo pushed forward, his bushy tail waving like a banner of a great general. The first day he covered only thirty miles. After that he managed to do fifty.

The two teams met as arranged, and the diphtheria serum was put into Seppala's sled. Although already tired, Togo bravely turned to go home. It was tough going. The weather was dreadful and the animals weary and cross. To speed up delivery of the medicine, a fresh team had gone out to meet Seppala. With masterful guidance the teams met in the white waste, and the serum changed hands. The fresh team raced to the stricken town.

Togo, the runt, had set a new record. He had covered four times the longest stretch ever done by a team. But he was not a young dog, and the strain had left him in bad condition. He did not recover quickly. To spare him the pain of seeing another dog put into the lead, Seppala gave Togo to a friend in Maine. This time the dog did not run away. Maybe he liked being a hero and a pet.

ADVENTURE


GREAT
RAI
G
35
CAPY.
LD.LM
LT.WT
137
SP
703
1-2

PETE WASHINGTON

by KATHLEEN R. SMITH

When Pete Washington had worked for one week as a box boy, he knew he was going to be fired. He knew why. He was too big and too clumsy.

He started growing in the fifth grade. By the seventh grade he was too big for the desks. In the eighth grade the kids started calling him "Two-ton." They even said his name — Pete WashingTON.

At first Pete was proud of being big. But the bigger he got the clumsier he got. When he was sixteen years old, Pete was 6′4″ and weighed 275 pounds. His family had to move out of their apartment on the third floor. The people downstairs told the landlord that Pete shook the house when he walked. One day he tripped and fell in the hall. Some plaster fell on the people who lived below. So Pete's family moved to the first floor, which cost more money.

In high school the coach wanted Pete to try out for the football team. But he was too clumsy.

"That boy could fall over a blade of grass," the coach said.

It was the same thing with baseball. "You grew too fast," said the coach. "You need exercises to help you."

While the other boys played ball, Pete did exercises.

Pete's first job was washing windows on Saturdays. He broke a step on the ladder and fell through a window. That was the end of that job. Then he worked at a car wash. He leaned on a little sports car and dented the fender.

"Pete, you go find a job," his mother said. "Your clothes are so big they cost more money. Size 15 shoes cost money. You eat so much I can hardly make the rent."

Pete found a job sweeping a barber shop. One windy day he swept a big pile of hair into a heap on the floor. A man opened the door and the wind blew the hair all around the shop.

"You're fired," the boss said.

The school found Pete a job as a box boy in a big store. This was a job Pete liked. Pete wanted to keep this job, but he was afraid he was going to be fired.

Mr. Clark, the boss, watched him. Every time Pete looked up, he saw Mr. Clark watching him. He saw Pete drop a jar of pickles. He saw Pete open the bags with a snap that tore them. He was there when Pete stepped on a woman's foot. The woman screamed.

"I think he broke every bone."

Mr. Clark helped the woman to a chair. He yelled at Pete.

"Go out and get the carts from the parking lot. I'll see you later."

Pete thought Mr. Clark meant, "I'll fire you later."

He put a long line of carts together. Pushing them in front of him, he started back to the store. The doors swung open.

He heard the woman scream again.

"She must be hurt bad," he thought.

He looked at her. Her hands were on her face and her eyes were big. She was looking at two men standing by the cash register. Mr. Clark had his hands in the air. The money drawer was open. One man was putting the money into a paper bag. The other man held a gun. He called to Pete.

"Hey, you big ape, get away from that door if you don't want to get shot."

"Do as he says, Pete," Mr. Clark called.

The woman screamed again.

All at once Pete got mad. He didn't mind the kids calling him Two-ton, but he didn't like being called a big ape. He looked at the man with the gun, and all his troubles flashed through his mind — being too big and clumsy, Mom talking about the rent, getting fired. Pete saw red.

Faster than he had ever moved, he turned the long line of carts. With a mighty push he shot them at the man with the gun. As the man fell, the gun spun from his hand into one of the carts.

The man with the money ran past Pete. Pete reached out one big arm and grabbed him. He tucked him under one arm like a bag of food. Another man ran up to Pete. He grabbed him under the other arm. One man kicked and yelled.

"Hey, Pete, let go of me. I'm Mr. Clark."

Pete looked down. He had grabbed Mr. Clark.

"Oh, no!" Pete said.

Mr. Clark ran to get the gun from the cart. He took the bag of money from the man Pete was holding.

"Make him let go of me," the man called.

The screaming woman was screaming again. She jumped up and down.

"Her foot must be better," Pete thought.

"He saved my life." She pointed to Pete. "That brave boy saved my life. Don't you dare fire him, Mr. Clark."

"Who's going to fire him?" grinned Mr. Clark. "I knew he was a good boy to have around. I had my eye on him all week."

Pete felt happy. For once he was glad he was big. He hadn't been clumsy when he pushed the carts at the man with the gun. Maybe he could go out for football again. Mr. Clark wasn't going to fire him. Pete dropped the man he was holding, putting a heavy foot on his chest.

"Thanks, Mr. Clark," he said, smiling.

THE WISH

by JANE SPRAGUE

Mike bit into the nice fresh Milky Way, and then quickly hid it behind his back.

"If you don't give me a bite of your candy, I'll tell Mama!" Cynthia was small for her age of five, but she knew how to get what she wanted. "I'm gonna *tell!*" She watched her tall brother, Mike, make up his mind.

"Oh, here! You can bite right up to where the paper is. And that's *all* you get!" Mike held out the Milky Way to let her bite off her share.

"I hate girls and sisters and especially *you.*" He glared at Cynthia. She stood with her feet far apart and her hands behind her back. Her pink shorts and blouse were already dirty, even though it was only ten in the morning.

"You wait till Mom sees you all dirty like that. She'll skin you alive." Mike enjoyed the picture in his mind. His mother would drag Cynthia into the house for a couple of hard slaps and a fast bath.

Cynthia only went on chewing the sticky candy. A tiny bit of creamy chocolate slipped out of the corner of her little red mouth and down her chin. Mike looked at her with disgust as she wiped her chin with the back of her hand and then rubbed her hand clean on her shorts.

"I wish you'd drop dead!" Mike turned and started to walk down the street.

"I wanna come! I wanna come!" Cynthia's face screwed up into a terrible knot and her mouth came open to cry. Her tongue and teeth were still brown with chocolate.

"Now, don't start that." Mike turned and came back to her again. "You don't want Mama to hear you cry, do you? You know this is Saturday. I have to play ball today with the guys. After lunch is when we go to the show. If you are a good girl now, I'll take you with me, okay?"

Cynthia nodded her head and winked back her tears with a terrible sob.

"Now, why don't you go play with Lucy Ann? See, there she is with her doll buggy?" Mike turned Cynthia around so she could see Lucy Ann.

"Look," Mike said, "Lucy's got a big *pickle*, too!"

That did it. Cynthia was off at a run. She just loved to eat. Mike had to smile when he thought of how the whole family steered Cynthia through life with food.

"Come on in and have a bath, Cynthia," Mother would say, "and *then* we'll have some *ice cream*."

"Come on and get in Uncle Jim's car," Father would say. "We'll go and get some new shoes and a *raspberry soda*."

"Get into bed, Cynthia," Big Sister, Joyce, would say. "And then you may have part of my *coke*."

Cynthia just follows her stomach around, Mike thought, as he watched her talk Lucy Ann out of half the pickle.

He'd better go now while he had the chance.

Mike went down the street to the next corner and then crossed over into an alley on the other side. It was a short cut to the park.

He liked to walk past the green garages in the alley. Most of them were like his family's, full of junk and locked up.

But once in a while somebody moved in or out and left the door of a garage open.

It was amazing how much stuff people kept, Mike thought.

He came to an open garage. He stopped to take a look at all the junk — baby's playpen, folded up; broken high chair; two backrests for the beach; an electric fan; about twenty big boxes; a kid's bike without a back wheel; three fishing rods; an old refrigerator; a pair of skates; and an old-fashioned radio.

Nobody was around. Must be moving out, not in, Mike thought as he walked along. Maybe they would have a garage sale of that stuff and sell many things for less than a quarter. If they did, he would like to buy that old radio. Boy, he'd like to fix that up and put it in his room. He'd remember the number on that garage, number fourteen.

He walked on to the end of the alley. He saw the guys waiting for him in the park as he came out.

"Hey, Mike, hurry up!" They were always having to wait for him to get away from Cynthia.

Mike wished again that he didn't have a little sister.

"I wish she'd drop dead!" He spoke out loud as he started to run over to where the guys were waiting.

After the game was over, the guys walked Mike home by the new slot-car place on Goodman Street.

"Let's come up and watch 'em tonight." The guys were always looking for something to do on Saturday night.

"Okay," Mike said. "I gotta take my kid sister to the show this afternoon."

The guys went on down the street and Mike went into his house.

"Hi, Mom. What's for lunch?"

"Hot dogs. Go call your little sister, will you, Mike?"

"Do I *have* to?" Mike knew his mother wouldn't even bother to answer that, so he went outside the house again. He put his hands around his mouth like the horn of a trumpet.

"Cyn-thee-ah! Cyn-thee-ah!"

He listened for a minute. There was no answer. He knew what would work.

"Cyn-thee-ah! Hot dogs for lunch!"

That would do it, Mike thought, as he went back inside. It never failed.

His mother put a plate with two hot dogs and buns in front of Mike. "Here, Mike, you might as well start. Remember, I want you to take Cynthia to the show this afternoon so I can go shopping."

"I know. I know." Mike bit into a hot dog and bun, juicy with mustard, pickle relish, and tomato ketchup.

"Where *is* Cynthia? That child never misses lunch," his mother said.

She walked outside to look. She looked both ways on the street. Lucy Ann's big sister was coming from the corner, holding Lucy Ann's hand.

"Have you seen Cynthia?"

Lucy Ann's sister shook her head. "No, I haven't. I found Lucy Ann playing down in that alley across from the corner. She's going to get it when my mother finds out." Lucy Ann started to cry as her sister dragged her along.

Mike's mother went back to her kitchen.

"Mike, Lucy Ann was down in that alley across the street. Do you think . . . ?"

Mike dropped his hot dog on his plate. The alley across the street was forbidden to Cynthia! He could picture in his mind the long, narrow way between the dark green garages.

That open garage, what about that? And that old refrigerator —what if she saw that? She might think there was food in it! Mike had heard of kids getting locked in those things!

Mike was out of his chair, running. He threw the front door open.

"What is it, Mike?" His mother hurried after him.

"I'll find her," he shouted back as he ran down the street.

Thank God I have long legs, he thought, as he watched the cracks in the sidewalk pass by quickly under his feet.

If she's in there, in that refrigerator, could she be alive? How long had it been since he left her playing with Lucy Ann?

And then he remembered. He'd wished her dead! Now maybe his wish had come true!

His feet went faster.

He didn't mean it. She was a pest, but he didn't really want her *dead*!

He heard footsteps behind him. He turned his head to look as he ran. It was his mother, trotting along as fast as she could. He turned into the alley. It was empty.

What if the garage was shut? What if it was locked?

His legs stretched to the limit. His heart pounded the blood into his ears. Every minute was important. How much air could there be in that refrigerator?

His heart took a leap when he saw that the garage doors were all closed. How could he find the right one?

He stopped. Now wait, he'd thought about that—in case he had a chance to buy that old radio. What *was* the number? It was a teen number. Nineteen? Thirteen? Fourteen? Fourteen — that was it!

He checked the numbers now as he ran. Finally he came to number fourteen.

There was a padlock on the door! It was locked, tight.

What should he do? She might not be in there. But then she might be, too. She wasn't in the alley anywhere.

Should he call the police? The police would take too long to come. They might not believe him. No, Mike knew he would have to break the lock himself. He'd get a new lock for the owner later.

But what to break it with? He searched the ground around the nearby garages until he found an old tire iron. That would do it.

He stuck the end of the iron bar into the padlock and twisted with all his might.

It didn't move.

Then he saw in his mind the face of his little sister taking a bite of his Milky Way. A lump came into his throat.

He stuck the bar into the jaws of the lock again, and he braced it against the side of the door. With all his strength, he twisted the lock. It creaked and finally snapped open.

By the time he had the lock off the door, his mother was there, too. She didn't ask any questions. She knew her baby's life was in danger, and Mike was doing all he could to save her.

Together, they lifted the heavy garage door. The refrigerator gleamed in the sunlight.

"Let me look, Mom," Mike said. In his heart he prayed to find it empty.

He pulled the handle down and swung the door wide.

"No!" His mother moved like lightning. She lifted out the little girl. Her mouth was blue and her body in the pink shorts and the dirty blouse was limp and lifeless.

"Here, Mom. Put her down on this box." Mike spoke like a man. His mother obeyed the grown-up sound of his voice.

Mike placed his mouth against the cold blue lips of his little sister. He breathed out gently because she was so small. He felt the little chest move up and down softly under his hand.

Don't die! Don't die! Don't die! He thought it like a prayer as he blew into her empty lungs easily, breath after breath. He didn't wish her dead. He'd never say it again. Don't die! Don't die! Don't die!

"Son, look!" His mother stopped him with a hand on his shoulder.

The little girl's face was a healthy color again. Her lips were a rosy red!

As Mike watched, Cynthia's eyelids began to move.

"Hey, Kid. We're having hot dogs for lunch," Mike said softly. He brushed the damp hair away from her face.

Her brown eyes opened wide.

"Hot dogs?" Cynthia's voice was weak and strange. Suddenly she saw her mother and the old refrigerator.

"Oh, Mommy. I got stuck in there!" A nice healthy cry filled the garage as Cynthia's mother picked her up and held her tight.

"Can you shut the garage, Mike? I'll give you money to get a new lock for the man. I'll tell him what happened, too."

"Okay, Mom." Mike slammed the door down and straightened up. He looked at Cynthia, riding along in front of him in her mother's happy arms.

"Let's eat fast, Kid. It's almost time to go to the show." Mike winked at his sister and watched her smile back at him.

SPRING, TRAINS, BEER

by LUIS F. HERNANDEZ

CHARACTERS

NARRATOR 1
NARRATOR 2
NARRATOR 3
MR. RAMIREZ
SERGEANT BROWN
RUDY
HENRY
MRS. RAMIREZ
MRS. BROWN
YARDMAN 1
YARDMAN 2
VOICE 1
VOICE 2

NARRATOR 1: Last Spring many newspapers told the amazing story of two boys who were locked in a boxcar for thirteen days. Here is a play about their adventure.

NARRATOR 2: San Miguel is a busy southern California town. Its history goes back to the time of the missions. But not until World War II, when a large air base was built on the edge of town, did San Miguel really start to grow. Since then, many new businesses have started, and San Miguel has become a railroad center. The rich nearby valleys send their goods to San Miguel for transfer to the East.

NARRATOR 3: Spring has come early to California. Warm air and the smell of spring make all kids on vacation go outside to explore and find adventure.

NARRATOR 1: Rudy Ramirez and Henry Brown live next door to each other in San Miguel. Rudy is skinny, tall, thirteen years old, with a pair of glasses that always slip to the end of his nose. Henry is twelve years old, freckle-faced, husky, light-haired, blue-eyed. Trouble comes whenever these boys get together. Mr. Ramirez and Air Force Sergeant Brown, the boys' fathers, are talking about the boys' latest troubles. Both fathers are very mad.

MR. RAMIREZ: I've had it. I can't afford any more. This does it.

SERGEANT BROWN: I know what you mean. Eight windows, one car window, one baby stroller, one market cart, and the Coopers' clothesline.

MR. RAMIREZ: Don't forget all the clothes — and Henry's broken arm.

SERGEANT BROWN: But this is it! They've been told to keep out of cars.

MR. RAMIREZ: Every time they get together, something happens. Rudy knows better than to fool around with a car brake.

SERGEANT BROWN: Where did they think the car was going to go, but downhill?

MR. RAMIREZ: And backwards at that!

SERGEANT BROWN: We're lucky it was only Mrs. Lopez's rose garden and the school fence.

MR. RAMIREZ: Eighteen feet of link fence.

SERGEANT BROWN: They could have been killed.

MR. RAMIREZ: It could happen yet.

SERGEANT BROWN: They simply can't be together anymore. They can't have anything to do with each other.

MR. RAMIREZ: What else can we do? I know Maria will go along with it.

SERGEANT BROWN: Virginia will have to see it our way.

NARRATOR 1: The fathers look around for the boys.

MR. RAMIREZ: Rudy, come here!

SERGEANT BROWN: You too, Henry!

NARRATOR 1: Both fathers spoke firmly. The boys were never to pal around together again.

NARRATOR 2: The boys had no idea they would run into each other bicycling near the railroad yard. And how could they turn down Mr. Norton's offer of a tour of the yard and a look at a new train from the East.

NARRATOR 3: Rudy and Henry listened to Mr. Norton and looked at all those wonderful boxcars that had been places they had never heard of. Mr. Norton told them of his first trip East in a boxcar, when he was their age. Maybe that's what got the whole thing started.

NARRATOR 1: Rudy and Henry waved goodbye to Mr. Norton and thanked him. Then they started home, forgetting their promise not to be together.

NARRATOR 2: The warm spring air, all those strange and wonderful places, and Mr. Norton's story of his first trip East were fresh in their minds. Rudy and Henry parked their bikes and sat under a tree. They talked about travel and adventure, and the five days of vacation left. Why not? How far could it be to Chicago? Rudy and Henry talked fast.

RUDY: There's no school to worry about.

HENRY: Mom and Dad would like the chance not to worry about me.

RUDY: I don't think my Mom and Dad are too happy with me either.

HENRY: Yeah, they say we are nothing but trouble.

RUDY: Are you chicken to try?

HENRY: You know I'm no chicken. Who started the car?

RUDY: Yeah, and who chopped up the school fence?

HENRY: That sure was funny.

RUDY: Remember old lady Lopez's face?

HENRY: Well, I'm no chicken.

RUDY: We could put the bikes right here in these bushes.

HENRY: Mr. Norton said that the big train was due back here in three days.

RUDY: Say, I've got a dollar and a half.

HENRY: I've got thirty cents.

RUDY: We could jump off every time the train stops and get something to eat.

HENRY: Come on! Let's go! Mr. Norton said it was pulling out at three.

RUDY: Chicago, here we come!

NARRATOR 3: The Chicago-bound train waited on the tracks. The boys found a boxcar with its sliding door halfway open.

NARRATOR 2: The boys had empty feelings in their stomachs, feelings of adventure. Henry boosted Rudy up. Then Rudy pulled Henry up into the boxcar. It seemed almost too dark to stay, but soon they were able to see the inside of the car.

RUDY: Hey, what's in all these boxes?

HENRY: Beer bottles, empty beer bottles.

RUDY: Man, does it *stink*!

HENRY: Forget it.

RUDY: Look, we can stack the boxes up like this and make a bed.

HENRY: Look here! Here's a pile of old sacks. We've got blankets.

RUDY: Man, is this great! Sh! I hear someone coming.

HENRY: Duck!

RUDY: Who is he?

HENRY: How do I know?

NARRATOR 1: The boxcar door banged shut. The train jerked forward. The boxes shook and the bottles rattled.

RUDY: We're off!

HENRY: We made it!

RUDY: As soon as we're out of the yard, we'll open the door and let in some light.

HENRY: And air! Boy, does this place stink!

NARRATOR 2: The darkness scared Henry and Rudy. The only light in the boxcar came from two air vents in the roof.

HENRY: Okay, we must be out of the yard. Let's open the door.

RUDY: It won't open.

HENRY: We're trapped!

RUDY: It stinks in here.

HENRY: Shut up! Your mother will hear you.

NARRATOR 3: Mrs. Ramirez had been calling Rudy for a long time. Mrs. Brown had just come back from the air base. She had seen her husband off on a test mission to Florida.

MRS. BROWN: Hi, Maria! Have you seen Henry?

MRS. RAMIREZ: Hi! No, I'm looking for Rudy. I've been looking for him for over an hour.

MRS. BROWN: Do you think they are together again?

MRS. RAMIREZ: They better not be.

MRS. BROWN: Henry!

MRS. RAMIREZ: Rudy!

MRS. BROWN: Why can't those two be like other kids.

MRS. RAMIREZ: They're always in trouble. I don't understand it.

MRS. BROWN: Maybe one of us should move. My husband could move to another base.

MRS. RAMIREZ: Oh, Ginny, that's not the answer. This is your home. All your friends are here.

MRS. BROWN: Oh! Henry, you just wait till you get home.

NARRATOR 1: The boys got used to the darkness of the boxcar. They weren't cold. The only trouble was the rattle of the bottles in the cases.

RUDY: That noise is driving me nuts.

HENRY: How come the train slows down so often?

RUDY: I don't know. Maybe we're coming to a town.

HENRY: I wish I could see.

RUDY: Yeah.

HENRY: That crack in the floor is no good. All you can see is the gravel and those boards under the tracks.

RUDY: Ties.

HENRY: Huh?

RUDY: That's what they're called. Ties.

HENRY: I wish we could get out.

RUDY: Me too. This is no fun if you can't see.

HENRY: Hey, I think we're stopping.

NARRATOR 1: The boys didn't know why the train stopped so often. And for such long times. Then there was all that noise that sounded like boxcars being put on or taken off.

NARRATOR 2: The boys had never been this late in getting home. Mrs. Ramirez and Mrs. Brown really got worried. They called the police. Forty-eight hours passed with no news of Rudy or Henry. Mr. Norton at the train yard read about the boys in the newspaper. He called Mrs. Brown and said he had talked with the boys two days before. The police looked around the train yard. They found the bikes. This made things worse. Maybe they ran away? They wouldn't walk, not those two. Of course, they jumped a train. But which one?

NARRATOR 3: Henry and Rudy lost their feeling for adventure. They tried and tried to get the door open, but no luck. They pounded on the door and hollered, but who could hear them with the train moving.

NARRATOR 1: They waited for the first stop. They screamed and hollered for help, but no one heard them. How could they know it was two o'clock in the morning in the train yard of a sleepy little town. They hollered at every stop.

NARRATOR 2: By now they were thirsty, hungry, sleepy, and really scared. The sacks made good beds and talking to each other helped a little. But they needed food. They found out that there was a little beer in the bottom of the bottles. They didn't like beer, but when you're really hungry and thirsty, you'll take anything.

HENRY: If my mom could see me drinking beer, she'd beat me to a nothing.

RUDY: I can't stand the stuff. Boy, am I hungry.

HENRY: I don't mind not seeing—it's the stink!

RUDY: Here take this one. I think it's got a little more at the bottom.

NARRATOR 3: Sergeant Brown's return from Florida caused all the newspapers in the country to pick up the story of the lost boys. San Miguel was filled with photographers and newsmen who came to get the full story.

NARRATOR 1: Mrs. Ramirez and Mrs. Brown were under doctor's care.

NARRATOR 2: Mr. Ramirez stopped working and helped Sergeant Brown look for their boys.

NARRATOR 3: The police, Boy Scouts, and men from the air base looked everywhere for the boys.

NARRATOR 1: All railroad yards were told about the missing boys. The railroad people said it was hard to know in which car the boys might be riding. A train could start in San Miguel, but it would change boxcars many times on its trip.

NARRATOR 2: Six days, seven days . . . thirteen days passed and still no news of Rudy Ramirez and Henry Brown.

NARRATOR 3: Rudy and Henry were losing weight. They lost all idea of time. They cried and blamed each other. They fought, but always ended up working together.

NARRATOR 2: To get to all the bottles they moved the beer cases around. Sometimes cases fell on them.

NARRATOR 1: Hunger and thirst were bad enough. Now they feared never being found.

HENRY: How do you know when you're dying?

RUDY: I don't know.

HENRY: My shoulder still hurts and my belly's sore.

RUDY: Every time the train jerks, another box comes down.

HENRY: I think we're slowing down again.

RUDY: Hold on. That's when it jerks the hardest.

NARRATOR 3: Sleep made time go by fast. Rudy and Henry learned to sleep while the car was moving.

RUDY: Henry! Hey, Henry, wake up, it's stopping.

HENRY: It's stopping.

RUDY: Hey, let us out!

HENRY: Hey!

RUDY: Help!

HENRY: Help!

RUDY: Somebody, help!

HENRY: Keep yelling, Rudy! Keep yelling!

RUDY: What for? They never hear us. Don't cry, Henry.

HENRY: Don't you cry. Just keep yelling.

RUDY: Who's crying!

HENRY: Hey, help! Oh, God, Help!

YARDMAN 1: Hey, is there somebody in there? Hey, Joe! There's somebody in here.

YARDMAN 2: Hold on! Let me help you open it up.

HENRY: Help!

RUDY: Help, open it up. For God's sake, open it up!

YARDMAN 1: What are you kids doing in there?

HENRY: Is this Chicago?

YARDMAN 2: Chicago?

YARDMAN 1: Sonny, this is Milwaukee!

RUDY: Oh, no.

YARDMAN 2: Hey, this kid has passed out.

YARDMAN 1: Get a doctor. Call the police.

NARRATOR 1: Soon everyone in the yard knew that these were the lost boys from some place in California. The boys didn't look too bad for being locked up fourteen days without food or water. A doctor sent the boys to a hospital, and the police called their parents.

VOICE 1 (on telephone): Yes, Mrs. Ramirez, we have your boy.

MRS. RAMIREZ: Rudy, you have Rudy? Thank God!

VOICE 1: Yes, yes, Rudy Ramirez.

MRS. RAMIREZ: Is he all right?

VOICE 1: Yes, ma'am. He's all right. Hungry and tired.

MRS. RAMIREZ: He's not hurt?

VOICE 1: No, no, he's in good shape.

MRS. RAMIREZ: How wonderful. Thank God! Thank God!

VOICE 1: He may never drink beer again, but he's fine.

VOICE 2 (on telephone): No, Mrs. Brown, Henry is not hurt.

MRS. BROWN: Oh! thank you, thank you!

VOICE 2: He has only a bruise on his shoulder.

MRS. BROWN: What? What?

VOICE 2: Now, now don't worry. Really, he's fine.

SERGEANT BROWN: We're flying up. We'll be there tonight.

VOICE 2: That's great!

NARRATOR 2: Fourteen days after the adventure started, Rudy and Henry sat side by side having their pictures taken. Almost every paper in the country had their story.

HENRY: I hope they aren't real mad.

RUDY: Me too.

HENRY: We really did it this time.

RUDY: Yeah, I hope they're not mad.

HENRY: They're right. We really make trouble.

RUDY: Hey, here they come!

MRS. RAMIREZ: Rudy! Rudy! Rudy!

HENRY: Mom, I'm sorry. Dad, I'll be good. I promise.

SERGEANT BROWN: Yes, son. I know.

HENRY: I'll never go near Rudy again.

MRS. BROWN: Henry, Henry, it's all right. Thank God.

RUDY: Me too, Mom. I won't go near Henry again.

MRS. RAMIREZ: Don't worry about it now. You're both all right.

RUDY: Boy, Dad, did it *stink*!

THE RACE

by **MARTHA W. NIGHTINGALE**

"Go, go, go Joe!" was yelled at him from the side of the street. The wind blew past him so fast that Joe did not get what was said. This race was just about over. It was the first of three races to find the area champs. Joe was neck and neck with big Fred and Skinny, thin Skinny, the tallest boy on the block. But then Joe saw Fred pull out a little. Then a little more. Now Fred was out in front. All Joe saw was the shine of Fred's new bike. All he felt was pain in his legs as he pumped with all he had. He had to win even if he was not as big as the other two. As they raced on, Joe felt that someone was at his side. Who was it? He did not look to see. Dust blew into his face from Fred's tires. It was hard to get air and his thin chest did not feel good. But Joe pumped harder and harder. His nails turned almost white under his grip. Little rivers ran down his face from his thick mat of dark hair.

Then it was over. Fred was over the line. Next were Joe and Skinny in a tie. Three other boys came in, one at a time. The last one was Beany. He was too short and too fat to race. He was always last. But he joked a lot. They all liked that. He was

O.K. as long as he didn't get in the way. He rode over to Joe. "Too bad, Joe," he said. "Your next one will be a winner."

Joe had a lot more in mind to say, but all he was able to let out was, "Better be!"

A lot of the boys hung around Fred's new blue bike. It was not a store-new bike, but it was new for Fred.

"Not a bad bike, Fred. How did you get it?" asked Sam.

"By working at Tom's East Side Drug Store," said Fred.

"Doing what?" asked Sam.

"Helping with stock and sweeping out."

"How long did it take to get the money for it?" asked Sam.

"Six months. It was hard work but worth it to me."

"I'll say so. Maybe I can get a job too. Do you think Tom needs more help at the drug store?" asked Sam.

"Maybe. Why not ask him?" said Fred.

"Don't do it, Sam," yelled Skinny from a little ways away. "You will miss the after-school ball games and going to the beach with us too."

Joe added, "Tom won't take you, Sam. He only takes guys who will come every day and be on time. I was only late three times and he let me off."

"Sure, sure," said Beany. "You were late only three times, but all in the one week you worked. On top of that, you were late an hour or so every time. The last day of the week you even forgot to go. Just went by to say you were sorry."

Joe wanted a new bike more than anything. He wished he had stuck it out at the store. Even so, he did not like it that Fred had this new bike. It was hard not to like Fred. But Fred had everything, and it just wasn't fair.

6

Skinny put his bike down. He was such a toothpick that it was easy for him to slide into the gang. He was soon face to face with Fred.

"Anybody who rides a bike like that will win, Freddie boy," he said.

"Oh, sure. Who's anybody?" asked Fred.

"Just anybody," said Skinny as he threw up his hands and tried to think. "Even Beany," he added.

"Wise guy," said Fred and started to get on his bike.

"Where you going? You scared you'll get beat or somethin'?" asked Skinny.

Fred didn't get mad fast, like a lot of the others. He just turned his sharp eyes on Skinny and seemed to look inside him. Then he turned back to the starting line for the second race. His body had a deep tan and was well filled out under his faded shirt and pants.

"Hey, wait!" called Beany. "How about my turn?"

Another boy yelled, "Ride your own bike, Fred. You'll only get left in the dust."

"The bike's a winner, not Fred," yelled still another boy.

"Don't be a fool, Fred," came from the sidelines.

But Fred came back and traded bikes with Beany. That was Fred for you. He'd let a guy have the shirt off his back, if it was going to help any.

Seven boys lined up for the next run. On Beany's little bike Fred had to pull his legs up and hold them out at the sides of the bars.

"Look at Froglegs," yelled Beany.

"He'll jump all over you, Bean," someone yelled back. The gang all howled.

They were off. Joe's only worry was Skinny now. Skin was out in front in no time. The boys on the sidelines didn't have bikes. So they were yelling at the ones who did. Joe had been very lucky to find his bike in the trash. With the bent fenders off, the chain fixed, and some sacks tied on for a seat, it was fine.

"Go, go, go, Joe!" someone yelled. This time Joe turned his head. Then he saw Fred coming up on him. How did Fred get so close? Joe felt he had to pump harder. The race had to be his this time. The bars that used to have pedals on them cut into his bare feet. Soon he had pain in his feet and chest too. He pumped and pumped anyhow. All that he wanted was to win. He was gaining on Skinny now. The green fenders on Skinny's bike had a big, red, glass button on the back. It was like a big, green snake with a shiny, red eye. It seemed to spit fire at Joe as he put all he had into the race. Just as Joe got up close to the eye, the race was over. Skinny had won. Joe came in next. Fred tied with two others for third place, and Beany was next to last. He was all smiles. "See, I told you the bike was a winner."

"What do you mean?" asked Skinny.

"Well, I beat Sam, didn't I?"

"Sure," said Fred as he came back for his bike.

"I'm sorry you lost," said Beany. "But thanks a load, Fred."

"O.K., Bean."

Joe was mad. Why did he fail again? He rode back to the line slowly. His chest pain did not go away, and it was hard to get air in. He was glad when they all sat down to rest. He didn't care what they were saying. His chest hurt too much. The pain went away little by little. He was going to win this time.

The crowd was big for the third race. Before Joe and the others lined up, they had to push the other kids back. They were off. It was neck and neck the first block. Then Skinny went out in front. Fred started to pull up on him. Joe pumped with all he had. He came up on the other two, little by little. He kept it up and pumped on and on. But when it was over, Fred had won again, Joe was next, and Skinny was close behind.

Joe's head was spinning. He was burning up. He headed for the sidelines. As he made Beany get out of his way, Beany smiled. "Well, you beat Skin anyhow."

Joe wanted to spit back, "All the good that does!" and a lot more too. But he was all in, and it was hard to get air, so he said nothing. He pumped on past the last of the gang and didn't even turn around to shake a fist when Fred called after him. Joe just rode off block after block to get away. It was hot. He hurt all over. The big All-School Bike Race was to be next weekend. Now he was going to be in it for sure. They took the top three boys from each area. But he still had to beat Fred to win the area prize. The Play Land tickets he won as area champ he planned to sell. With the money he was going to get a real seat and pedals for his bike, and maybe fenders too.

Joe parked by an open door and sat on the step in the shade. If he had to sit there all week he was going to find a way to beat Fred. He hated him.

One way to beat was to ask someone not in the All-School Race to let Joe ride his bike. No, there was a rule about that. You had to ride your own bike to be in the area finals.

Maybe the best way was to take another bike that was better than his and say that he found it in the trash. But who throws away good things? He needed a better story than that. But nothing better came to him.

Another way was to be sure Fred was out of the race. He had to beat him up. No, Fred was too big for Joe. Skinny was the one to do it. Skinny wanted to win the race too. But did he want to win so much he'd beat up on Fred? No, Skinny always stood up for Fred.

The only thing left was to do something to Fred's bike, like cut some spokes. No, Fred was sure to see them, get them fixed, and then find out who did it. Whatever Joe did, it had to look like nobody did it. Just bad luck.

Soon Joe fell back, too tired to think more. A hot wind came up. It pulled at his rag of a shirt and banged the broken door by his head. Tin cans and boxes seemed to be racing into the doorway to get away from the oven-hot blast. But Joe did not stir.

He was asleep a long time. When he came to, he had sand on his lips. He was part of a pile of cans and papers. A thick coat of dirt was all over his bike. By now it was dark, and he was still hot and wet all over. He wanted food. He hoped to find some at home, but his dad had been out of work for the past months. Joe's last full meal was longer ago than that. He headed home anyhow. He had to spit dirt all the way. There was a lot of it in his bike chain, too. So he had to wheel his bike all the way.

Most of the next day he spent getting the chain clean. And by the end of the day he had a plan for winning the All-School Race. The plan was a good one, but Joe didn't feel good about it. Maybe he had better not do it. Every time Joe saw Fred that week, the plan was on. Other times when Joe was cool, it was all off. Joe never had such a bad week. By the day of the race, Joe was in bad shape.

Joe was the first one to show up at the school. So he kept riding around blowing smoke from a butt he had found. When the others started coming, he found that he didn't want to talk to them. So he kept riding around. Then all at once he spotted Fred coming. Just the way Fred called out to him — all smiles and looking so big on his shiny bike — made fire rise up in Joe.

Just before lineup, the coach called all the boys inside. He told them the rules for boys in the race and the kids on the sides. Then he called for the three winners from each of the area races. Just as Fred gave Joe's name to the coach, Joe slid in the door.

"Where you been?" asked Fred with his big smile.

"Just around."

Joe felt very jumpy and wanted to hide his feelings. So he slowly leaned back on the wall and put his hands in his pockets. He found that one still had a lot of fresh dirt in it. He was sorry he didn't have time to use it all.

Every eye was on the coach as he showed the shiny All-School cup. The names of all the past winners were on it. He also showed the Play Land tickets and ribbons for area winners. Joe was going to get them if it was the last thing he did. By the next week his bike was going to be the best one in the gang.

The boys wheeled their bikes into place outside. Joe and Skinny were on each side of Fred. The gun went off. All three boys pushed off hard. Joe felt his tires grind. His back tire spun around. Dirt blew up around them. The boys on the sides stepped back a little to get out of it. For a while the three were even. Then Fred seemed to find it hard to pump. His chain was grinding like it was full of dirt. He fell back. The other two sped on ahead. Fred pushed with all he had. Slowly he began to pull up to the other two.

Joe kept his eye on the marker at the end. His chest pain was bad again. But he was out in front. Just a little more was all he had to do. The pain was so bad in his feet, legs, and chest that he felt nothing else. There was nothing in the world for Joe but pain and the pole at the end of the run. He did not even hear the yells from the sides. He was giving it his all.

Then a loud bang filled his ears. He felt a bump. His bike began to skid. He tried to hold it up, but it went down. His tire had a hole in it as big as an egg. He jumped up again. He was going to race with or without a tire. The others flew past him.

Even with the chain grinding and very hard to turn, Fred pulled up on Skinny. Fred was even with Skinny. It looked like a tie. Joe kept pumping, but it was no use. Just at the last Fred pulled ahead of Skinny. Everyone was yelling and jumping up and down. Joe looked after them. All he saw was the shiny, red-eyed snake on the back of Skinny's bike.

It seemed that even that thing had beaten him. His eyes burned. Somehow he had to get even.

When the prizes were given out, Joe sat at the back of the gym with his head in his hands. How did Fred ever make it with all that dirt in his chain? How? And why did that tire have to go out on him? Joe just sat and looked at his feet. Pain still came over him in waves. He saw red. He hoped no one saw that his eyes were wet.

Coach called Fred over to give him the tickets. When Coach held them out, Fred did not take them. Fred wanted to say something. There were lots of yells from the boys who wanted Fred to take the tickets.

Coach said, "Hold it, boys. Let's see what he has to say."

Fred stood up and looked around the room. His eyes stopped when he found Joe in the back. Then he started, "I just can't take the tickets, Coach. It just ain't fair. Joe's tire blew out so it ain't fair. Thanks anyhow." He sat down.

Joe woke up fast. What made Fred do that? Joe felt the fire inside cool down a little. A soft wave of good feeling came in. Maybe Fred was not so bad after all. No one said anything. They all just sat or stood there. Then someone yelled, "Run the race over."

Another boy yelled, "Come on, Fred, take the tickets." At that the boys went wild.

It was a long time before Coach was able to get them to stop yelling. Then he began, "I am very glad Fred wants so much to have the race a fair one for everyone in it. But the rules for the All-School Race say that the first one over the line is the winner and no race can be run over again."

Then the coach walked over to Fred and slipped the book of ten tickets into Fred's pocket.

After that Fred came over to Joe with a nice smile. "I want to split these tickets with you and Skinny," he said as he counted out three of them. "I'm real sorry about your bike, Joe. Here, take the extra one to help make up for it." He handed Joe four tickets.

Joe found it hard to say anything. At last he got out, "Thanks, Fred, thanks a lot."

As Fred began to go, he said, "I have to find Skinny now. See you later, Joe."

Only after Fred left did Joe think again about what he did to Fred's bike. It made him sick so he slipped out the door and past the bike rack. Even the green snake on Skinny's bike seemed to look down on him. Why did he have to get so mad? Joe shook the rest of the dirt out of his pocket. He wanted no part of it now. He hoped Fred never found out about it.

I'LL TELL YOU WHY

by KATHLEEN R. SMITH

You ask how I got this black eye? How I got the cut on my head? Why I walk with a cane? I'll tell you why. My little brother Jerry is why.

You never saw a seven-year-old kid like Jerry. He never gets hurt. Yet all the time he is doing crazy things. Once we had an apartment on the fourth floor. Jerry falls out of the window. Does he get hurt? No. I do.

Mom is yelling. Grandma is yelling. People all over are yelling. So I run down the stairs. I trip and break my leg.

Another crazy thing about Jerry. He loves the freeway. He gets out of bed at night and goes to the freeway. There's a fence there and he stands and looks at cars. Just looks. He likes the noise, too. Ever think how a man feels driving fast on the freeway and sees this *kid*?

So now I can't go to my class where I'm learning to fix cars, and I can't go to work at the market for a while. This is why.

It is a hot night. Mom is in the hospital. I work late at the market. It is cool in the market. When I get out, man, is it hot! It seems like there isn't any air, just heat.

I get home. Grandma is sitting in the dark. The screens are torn, and bugs come in if the light is on.

"Where's Jerry?" I say.

"He went for a walk. He's not back yet. I told him to go to Mr. Burt's to ask him to fix the screens before your ma comes home."

When Pa died he told me, "Take care of Jerry," so I say, "I'll go look for him."

First I go to Mr. Burt's house. I ring the bell for a long time. When Mr. Burt comes, he is mad. "You want me to fix the screens *now*?" he says. "The kid wakes me up to tell me about the screens. Now you. Get out and let me sleep."

Then I think maybe Jerry went to see Mom. He does that some nights, late. How he gets in there, I don't know. So I go to the hospital. I try to get in.

"Get out," some nurse says.

"I've got to see my mother," I say.

"Do you have to see your mother late at night? You're a big boy now."

Anyway, I find Jerry isn't there.

So then I know where he is. I go to the freeway.

That's where the trouble starts.

Near the offramp I see a car, a long, black, shiny Continental. Three guys are taking stuff from the car — three big guys. First, I want to go away. Then I get this feeling. I get this feeling that Jerry is in this. How, I don't know. But something tells me Jerry's there.

So I walk nice and easy. When I get near the car, this guy yells, "You want something?"

"I'm looking for my brother," I say.

"He's looking for his brother," he says to the others.

"How nice," they say. "Looking for your brother. Maybe you'll find something else."

That's when I get hit on the head.

I fall. I think I'm dead. Then I hear a yell. "Don't you hurt my brother."

From behind the car runs my brother Jerry. He is holding a dog. He jumps on one guy and bites him. The dog bites him, too. Then they start hitting Jerry. O.K., he's a pest, but he's my brother.

I get up and start hitting. Jerry is hitting, too. So is the dog. We are losing when this man runs up — about 250 pounds of man. The three guys run away fast. He hits me. I go down.

"That's my brother," yells Jerry. "Don't hit him."

When I can sit up, the man helps me into the car.

"I ran out of gas," he says. "This boy said he would watch my car while I went to get some."

"After you left, these guys come," says Jerry. "The dog and I hid. We hid till we had to save my brother's life."

"This is a fine kid," the man says. "You should take better care of him. A kid should not be out at night."

"I got a sore leg, too," says Jerry.

"You poor kid! We'll drive to a doctor," says the man.

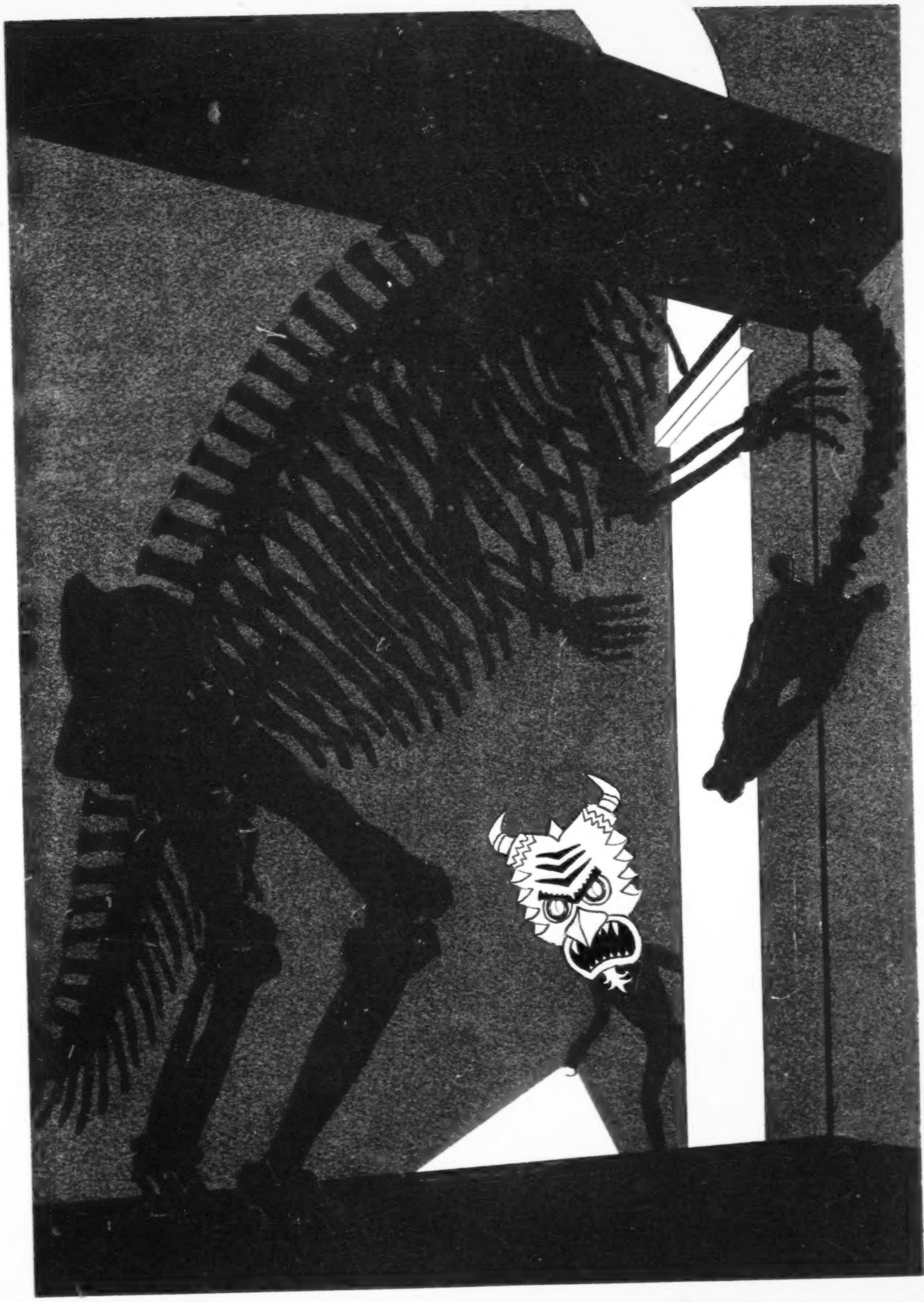
I say to Jerry, "This is the last time you go out at night. You go out again and I'll —"

The dog doesn't like what I say. That's how I get this bad leg. The dog bites me.

So I miss class. I miss work. I'm a mess. Jerry has a Band-aid on his leg.

Where is Jerry now?

He's out spending money. I forgot to say the man gave him a lot of money for saving his car and his dog. And for saving me.



MONSTERS AND MUMMIES AT MIDNIGHT

by JANE SPRAGUE

Ted's favorite word was *why*. He drove his friends crazy. He would never take a simple answer. He always wanted to know more.

"Someday you're just going to *why* yourself to death," Bill said. "And even if I am your best friend, I won't care."

"Why not?" Ted wanted to know.

"See? You're crazy! You're worse than a nosy old lady. You gotta know everything." Bill started to walk faster. "Come on. This place will give you a lot more questions to wonder about."

The two boys hurried up the long walk to the big, gray county museum. They had been here before, on a school field trip. But there were lots of things they wanted to see again.

"Let's go to look at the skeletons of the prehistoric animals," Ted said. "I like to look at the saber-toothed tigers."

"Okay," said Bill, as they went past the big glass doors and the guard in the dark-blue uniform. "I don't care where we go as long as we see the mummies from Egypt. I like them the best."

All afternoon the boys walked around the museum. Even Ted began to feel tired.

"Come on, Ted. We'll have to catch the bus back home pretty soon. Let's go see the mummies now."

"Okay," Ted said.

They went down to the basement floor. There were only a few people left in the museum now. The boys had the mummy room all to themselves. There wasn't even a guard there.

They stood beside a glass showcase, looking at the mummy of an Egyptian princess.

"Look at her toes where they undid the cloth. Look how dry and yellow they look, like old paper." Ted's eyes didn't miss a thing.

"She's awfully small — I mean, for a grown-up woman."

"People used to be smaller. And anyway, in four thousand years I guess you'd shrink up, too." Ted was on the other side of the case looking at the outside of the mummy's box.

Bill went over, too. "That gold paint looks brand new."

"Must have been inside another case all that time."

Ted turned away. He looked at a big stone thing, next to the wall, on the floor. It looked a little like a bathtub.

"Hey, Bill. Look at this!"

Bill came over. "Huh, it's so deep that little kids would drown trying to take a bath in that thing."

"It's not a tub, stupid. It's an old Greek coffin. See, it has a fancy name. Sar-kah-fah-gus."

"What? Say that again."

"Sar-kah-fah-gus. Sarcophagus. See the carving all over it?" Ted was kneeling down on the floor to look at the stone coffin.

"It's nice, for a coffin. But it gives me the creeps. I think we'd better get going." Bill started for the door of the room.

"No, not yet. I want to stay a little longer, Bill. Why don't you go upstairs and look at the clock? I'll wait for you right here."

"Okay. I'll be right back." Bill went out and left him. Ted touched the stone of the old coffin. He tried to think what the man might have looked like, carving that stone. He wondered what is was like inside.

Ted looked around. Nobody was there. He looked down at his feet. He was wearing tennis shoes. They wouldn't hurt anything.

In two seconds he was inside the coffin, lying on his back. He had to bend his knees to fit. The sides were so high that his knees missed the top by about four inches.

He folded his arms like the mummy's in the glass case. He tried to understand that four thousand years ago, somewhere in Greece, someone had been put into this very coffin.

Ted closed his eyes and thought of the pyramids and Greek buildings. Just for a few minutes, he let himself rest. He was tired from all that walking around. The stone felt cool under his back.

Bill came down from upstairs. He was hurrying. They were going to close the museum right away.

Bill looked into the mummy room. He didn't see Ted anywhere. Perhaps a guard had told him to leave.

Bill ran up the stairs quietly in his tennis shoes. He watched for Ted in the small crowd of people going out the main door.

When he didn't see Ted, Bill began to worry. Maybe Ted had left for the bus stop without him. Maybe the guard at the door would know. Everybody *had* to come out this way.

"Say, mister. Did you see a boy about as tall as me leave here in the last five minutes?"

"I might have. What was he wearing?"

"Gray slacks and a red shirt. Tennis shoes, too."

The guard looked out at the street toward the bus stop.

"Is that him, running along out there?"

Bill looked. Was that Ted? He was wearing the right clothes, okay. But the boy looked shorter than Ted. Still, he wasn't here, and he wasn't in the mummy room.

"I guess that's him. Thanks."

Bill took off down the long path, cutting across the lawn to beat the bus to the stop. He saw the boy get on and Bill had to run fast to catch the same bus.

He was the last one to get on. He paid his money and moved down the aisle slowly. After about two stops, he got far enough back to see that the other boy wasn't Ted at all!

Bill didn't know what to do. He was supposed to be home in an hour. Maybe Ted got an earlier bus. But why would he do that? Bill couldn't figure it out. He'd just have to go home and call up Ted's house.

After the doors of the museum were locked, the six guards walked all around, checking all the rest rooms and display rooms. They wanted to be sure no one was locked in the museum for the night.

When they were finished, five of them said goodnight to one another. The sixth one was the night guard. He would stay in the museum all night.

After the other guards left, the night guard went into the office. He had to check the building every hour. In between times he had other work to do in the office. It would be a long, quiet night for the guard.

All the lights in the museum were off except some tiny green ones near the floor. They were just bright enough so the guard wouldn't need a flashlight.

Outside the small, high windows of the mummy room, the winter sky was dark when a church clock struck midnight. The little green lights from the hall made everything in the room look a little bit green.

Inside the stone coffin, Ted, in his sleep, tried to stretch his legs out. When he couldn't do it, he turned over on his side. His elbow bumped the side of the sarcophagus. It hurt, and he opened his eyes.

Where was the window at the foot of his bed? Where was the street light outside?

He put out his hand and felt the cold stone. Then he remembered. He sat up and then pulled himself to his feet, holding onto the sides of the coffin. He stepped out of it and stood there, trying to think what had happened.

Bill must have gone home. No, he wouldn't do that. He would have come down to get me, Ted thought. He must not have seen me inside the stone tub. He must have thought I had left *him*.

Now the museum was closed, and Ted was alone. What would they do when they found him here in the morning?

Suddenly, he heard footsteps! That would be the night guard. Ted knew there were a lot of priceless things in the museum. They would have to have a guard. He might think Ted was a thief!

Ted looked around for a place to hide. He decided to get back into his stone coffin. The high sides would hide him from the guard. If he could only think of a way to speak to the guard without getting shot.

Ted got back inside the sarcophagus. He listened as the footsteps got closer and closer. Through a wide arch he could see the light from a flashlight reflecting on the ceiling. It moved slowly from place to place, coming nearer and nearer to the mummy room.

They stopped! Ted's heart stopped, too. He held his breath.

Then the footsteps sounded as if they moved toward the mummy case. The light wobbled on the ceiling, as if the guard was changing it to his other hand. There was a little sound of something metal scraping against metal.

What can he be doing? Ted wished he dared to look.

Then the scraping stopped, and Ted heard the door of a glass case sliding back.

Why would a guard open one of the cases? Then Ted heard a rattling sound, like the sound of a woman's beads being shaken. Suddenly he remembered the beautiful necklace that was in the case next to the mummy princess. Why would a guard be fooling around with that?

Then Ted had a thought that made the duck bumps come up on his arms. A chill ran down his back as he suddenly knew the truth. That wasn't a guard out there, fooling around that case! It was somebody else! A thief? How did he get in?

That was easy, Ted thought. He could get in the same way I did. Just stay in.

The glass case slid shut. The light wobbled again and the footsteps moved away. When it seemed that they were nearly out of the door, Ted got to his knees and looked over the top of the coffin.

A huge man was moving out of the room. Or was it a man? Ted's hair came up on the back of his neck. The thing looked about nine feet tall! Its head was huge. Ted couldn't see any neck, just a huge head that got wider at the top. Ted watched in horror until the thing went out the door to the right.

Alone again in the green light, Ted stepped out of his hiding place. He went over to look at the case. He wanted to see if it was locked again.

He started to put his hands on it, and then he thought about fingerprints. He'd seen lots of shows where some stupid guy got stuck for a crime because his fingerprints were found.

He unbuttoned a couple of buttons on his shirt so he could cover his fingers with the tail of the shirt. Then he reached up and put his fingers in the little dent in the glass and pushed. It didn't move. Locked!

He buttoned his shirt again, while he thought. He knew the case had been opened. He heard it. Well, the necklace was gone. He was sure about that.

He moved closer and bent down to look in. It was hard to see in the dim light. But he was wrong. The necklace was there!

Ted stood up. How could that be?

Just then he heard the footsteps again. He wasn't going to stick around here if that monster was coming back!

He started to run out the door to the left. He ran right into the monster!

Its right hand grabbed Ted by the back of the neck. The left hand poked the flashlight into Ted's face. In the light, Ted could see that the huge head was a heavy, carved, Chinese dragon head. At least the thing was human inside, Ted thought. He was wearing a mask. Maybe he was in that Chinese room when Ted and Bill were there in the afternoon. Nobody would notice him under that thing.

The hand holding his neck was harsh. It pinched Ted's slender neck until tears came to his eyes. Ted bent over to try to ease the pain.

"What are you doing here?" The whisper hissed out of the bright, red-painted mouth of the horrible mask. Huge green and gold dragon eyes glared down at Ted.

"I fell asleep. They locked me in." Ted had to whisper. The man's hand pinched his neck harder if he let his voice get louder.

"I know a way out. Come with me." The man started down the hall to the right.

When he felt that Ted was walking along willingly, the man let up on Ted's neck. Ted waited until they got to the stairs. Then he broke away and ran up the stairs softly, two at a time.

The man had to hold the huge head with his hand when he ran. He had trouble seeing, too. It was easy for a fast runner like Ted to get up the stairs and into the long hall before the man did.

Ted ran into a huge room. It was easier to see now that his eyes were used to the green lights. Great shadows blackened the dark floor of the room. Tremendous figures stood everywhere in the dark. Where was he? The dinosaur room! How much bigger they looked at night!

Ted looked up at the great shape of the prehistoric mammoth. He felt tiny and weak, looking at those old bones that stood three times higher than a man.

Ted got behind the base of a dinosaur case. He saw the man come in the door. The flashlight flickered around the room. Ted ducked his head down.

The man turned and went down the hall toward the other end of the building. Ted came out and followed him, keeping close to the wall on the blind side of the mask.

Suddenly, a loud bell rang. It rang three times. It sounded like a huge doorbell.

Ted watched the man, who stopped when he heard the bell. Then the man turned around, took off the mask, and set it on the floor. He turned off the flashlight. Ted could see that the bell had scared him.

Ted stepped back into a small room off the hall. The man came running past Ted. He went into the dinosaur room again. He ran to the corner and found a long window pole.

He knows right where to look, even without the flashlight, Ted thought, hiding behind a case. The man pushed up a window. He put the pole on the floor and started to climb up on the windowsill. Something fell out of his coat pocket. It was the necklace!

Ted had been right after all! The man *was* stealing from the museum. Ted ran to get the necklace before the man could get back down to the floor. Ted grabbed up the necklace and ran toward the door. The man was coming fast.

Just as Ted started up the hall, all the lights in the building came on.

Ted turned and saw the man stop. He was a tall, thin man. He could be an Egyptian, maybe, Ted thought.

The man glared at Ted. They both heard the footsteps of many people coming up the stairs. The man decided to take the chance.

He started after Ted. Ted ran toward the stairs.

Ted knew the man could catch him now that he wasn't wearing the mask. Ted saw a guard and a policeman coming up the stairs.

"Here! Catch!" Ted tossed the necklace to the policeman as the man made a grab for him. Ted hung onto the stair railing. The man reached too far, lost his balance, and fell down the stairs. He rolled in a heap all the way down to the feet of a policeman.

The policeman held the necklace in one hand. His other held a gun.

Some other people were coming up the stairs. Ted was glad to see Bill and Bill's father.

"Is this the kid, mister?" the guard asked Bill's dad.

"It sure is."

"Hi, Ted," Bill said. "What are you playing? Cops and robbers?"

"You may be just about right, son," the Sergeant said.

"That guy broke into the jewel case. I was in the stone coffin and I heard him. He took out the necklace and left a false one in the same place. He was wearing a dragon-head mask."

"I know this man, Sergeant," the guard said. "He used to work here as a guard. He tried to get that necklace once before."

"Well, we'll take him downtown and make sure he doesn't try it again."

"If it hadn't been for you, young fella, he'd have made it this time. I didn't hear a sound." The guard winked at Ted.

"I fell asleep in that coffin. I just wanted to know how it felt to be in an old thing like that. I have tennis shoes on. I didn't think it would hurt it any, made of stone like it is."

"Well, I guess if every kid that goes through here tried it, even that stone would wear out. But most of them would rather not get into a coffin. I don't think you did it any harm."

The man was beginning to wake up. Ted was glad he hadn't seen his angry face. It looked worse than the mask. Why did he want the necklace?

Bill saw Ted starting to wonder again. "Let's get out of here before Ted decides he's gotta find out *why* that guy stole the necklace," Bill said. He grabbed Ted's arm and pulled him down the rest of the stairs.

UNHAUNTED HOUSE

by STAN NUSSBAUM

Eleven o'clock on a dark night. A group of eight young people are in the living room of an old house. All of the characters are numbered, instead of being named.

1: Is this house really haunted?

2: People say it is.

3: We've been here over two hours, and I haven't seen any ghosts.

1: Silly, you can't see ghosts. They could be standing beside you, and you'd never know it.

4: What do they look like?

2: The only ghost I've ever seen was at a Halloween party. It had on a white sheet.

3: I'll bet it didn't even scare you.

2: It did scare me a little, but I knew it was really my brother.

4: Where did we ever get the idea to visit a haunted house?

1: I suggested a graveyard, but it was too far to walk.

5: I still don't like it. I shouldn't have let all of you talk me into this.

3: One for all, and all for one. That's our motto.

2: We're trying to prove there is no such thing as a real ghost.

5: How do you intend proving it?

3: By staying here another hour.

1: Remember, we did get permission from our parents to come to this old house.

2: My father said, "Every boy and girl wants to visit an old house."

4: My mother said this was a foolish adventure.

6: I heard a noise outside. Is anyone there?

3: I heard nothing. You are imagining again.

6: I'm a little edgy, I must admit.

5: *You* might be edgy, but *I'm* scared.

1: All of you are acting like four-year-olds. Remember we are almost adults.

5: Speak for yourself. I think I'll go home.

6: Wait a minute. One for all and all for one.

2: That's better. How do we catch a ghost?

3: Could we sprinkle salt on the ghost's tail?

4: Act grown-up, all of you. You are joking about something serious.

5: I hate to say it, but we should turn off our flashlights.

6: You're right, and we should be quiet. Ghosts like a quiet place.

3: Let's do just that. Turn off your flashlights and maybe we'll be in luck. (All dim flashlights, and room is quiet.)

1: Do you hear anything?

6: I hear my heart beating.

3: I hear water dripping.

4: I hear the wind blowing.

5: I hear someone opening the door.

7: (Door opens. Enter 7.) I'm sorry I'm late. My brother had the car, and I had to wait for him to drive me over.

4: You scared us.

7: I didn't mean to do it. It was so quiet coming up the front steps.

1: Here we are. No ghost yet.

3: We'll see one soon.

2: I hope soon comes soon. My mother and dad are picking me up at midnight. I hope it comes before then.

5: Where did we get the idea of ghost hunting?

7: I read a magazine article. It sounded like fun.

6: We must be quiet so the ghost can appear. (All is quiet.)

3: No ghost.

7: Sh-h-h-h-h.

8: (Door opens. All quiet.) Wh-o-o-o-o!

5: Gulp!

3: Who is it this time?

8: I'm a ghost!

6: If you're a ghost, what's your name?

8: Does it matter?

3: Are you real?

8: Why tell you? You don't understand.

1: It might be a ghost.

2: I don't believe in them.

8: You'd better believe in me.

6: It sounds like a voice I've heard before.

4: What's your game, ghost?

8: You and your friends want to know about ghosts. I will tell you. I am over one hundred years of age. I became a ghost in the Civil War. My mother was a slave, and my father was a soldier in the Union army.

3: How exciting!

1: It sounds too good to be true.

8: Shall I go on? My grandfather was a pirate, and my grandmother was a princess.

7: I can't believe you. Your voice sounds like someone I've known before.

8: Once I was a student. I had many friends in my class.

2: Did you live in a house then?

8: Yes, for a while. But then I lived in an apartment with foster parents.

3: Did you go to school like we do?

8: Of course. I was just like you. I had fun, too.

4: Did you dance?

8: Naturally. We didn't do dances like you. Our dances were minuets and waltzes.

1: No rock and roll?

8: Not at all. I must say I like some of your modern dances.

3: Mr. Ghost, we know about your father and mother and what you did in your last life, but I have a most important question.

8: Yes?

3: How does it feel to be a ghost?

8: In my opinion, I'm not a ghost. You are ghosts to me.

5: You are friendly, too.

2: How would you like to be a member of our group?

8: That sounds great, but you'd have to meet here. I'm so busy, I don't get into town often.

6: That's out. My parents would never believe it.

8: My living room could be the clubroom, and the attic would be a secret meeting place.

5: How would we explain you to our friends at school?

8: No one could see me but you.

1: Let's make the ghost a member of the group.

3: We could keep it a secret from everyone.

7: It would be a group secret.

4: I'm for it. Shall we take a vote?

2: Are all in favor?

Everyone: Yes!

5: Then it's passed. You are now a member of the group.

1: What shall we call you?

8: Call me X.

3: Are you a boy or a girl?

8: I'm X; this means, take your choice. For those of you who think I'm a boy, do so. (8 leaves.) For those of you who think I'm a girl, do so.

1: Oh, boy! I'm excited. A real ghost belongs to our group.

9: (Enter 9.) What's going on here?

3: You missed the fun. We took a real live ghost in our group.

9: Of all the dumb tricks. There are no ghosts. You know that.
5: But we saw it.
6: It's over a hundred years old.
7: It was killed in the Civil War.
1: Its mother was a slave, and its father was a soldier.
9: Go on.
6: Its grandfather was a pirate.
4: Its grandmother was a princess.
3: Once it was a student, like us.
9: Is it in this room?
7: Of course. Speak, ghost! (No answer.)
9: Come on.
5: It lived in an apartment.
9: Did they have apartments in those days?
6: It went to school, had fun, and liked parties, just as we do.
9: I'll bet it liked to dance.
2: Naturally. Only the dances were the minuet and waltz, not rock and roll.
9: Except for the minuet and waltz bit, all that sounds like someone living right now.
5: Who can it be?
9: That's anyone's guess. But it is no ghost, I can tell you that.
6: Let's look around and discover who or what it is.
3: I'll take the attic if someone goes with me.
1: I'll look around the bedroom.
4: I'll take the kitchen.
6: I'll take the dining room.

5: I'll go out to the front lawn.

9: Let's go. (All exit. Enter 8.)

8: They are going to be surprised when they find they've let me into their group.

4: (Enter group from different directions.) Have you seen a ghost?

5: It's around here.

2: It has to be in this room.

6: It was here a second ago.

1: Nothing to look under in this room. It's empty!

8: No ghost here. Look somewhere else.

7: Your voice? Who are you?

8: I'm the owner of this house. My parents divorced and I moved away from this neighborhood five years ago. I dreamed of coming back to my old home.

3: This haunted house was your home?

8: I know it doesn't look like much now, but then we had curtains on the windows, rugs on the floor, flowers in the yard, and I loved it.

9: Why did you come back?

8: I wanted to pretend things were like they used to be. I wanted to pretend my father was here, but things have changed. My father left long ago. I have been moving from foster home to foster home. And now, people on this street even told me my own house was haunted.

5: We're looking for the ghost. We saw it.

8: I am your ghost, I confess.

7: I knew your voice sounded human.

6: Why did you do it?

9: We would have gone away if you'd told us it was your house.

8: I didn't want to tell you. I liked having you here. It made it seem like old times. I arrived a little before you did, and when I heard you come in, I thought I'd have a little joke.

2: It was no joke.

8: You didn't mind. Someone even said I was nice.

4: You were.

5: We made you a member of our group.

8: You can forget that. You have your group ways, and I do not fit them.

1: I'm not so sure about that.

6: One for all, and all for one.

7: We'd like to help you.

3: That's right. What can we do?

8: I don't know.

9: We would help refurnish your house.

7: We could help get you a job.

6: We could be your friends.

5: We could help you get started in school.

4: We could help get your mother or father back to this house.

3: Maybe we could change your luck.

2: You will be in the group like we are.

1: We will help you get a new start.

8: I don't know what to say to you. If what you say comes true, my life will change. My future had nothing before I came back to my old house tonight, but now I feel as if I have friends on whom I can count.

6: (Knock on door.) What's that?

5: It's our parents waiting in front.

8: Good night, group.

4: We'll see you bright and early tomorrow morning. Operation ghost starts then.

3: When you've got friends, you're really *in*.

(The curtain closes.)

THE CAR THIEF

by JANE SPRAGUE

The first time Julius saw the red convertible was Monday evening, the first week of summer vacation. He came out on the porch of his house to cool off, and there it was.

It was parked in front of the tiny green house across the street. An old lady lived there all alone. Who would come to see her with such a beautiful car?

Julius sat down on the top step and leaned against the square post of the porch. He couldn't take his eyes off that car. His eyes followed the long smooth line of it, from the shiny hood to the highly polished rear deck. The black cloth top was clean and tight. It was some car all right.

Pretty soon a woman came out of the house. She closed the green door carefully behind her and stepped off the porch of the house. She was wearing white high-heeled shoes. She carried a small black suitcase in her hand, and a big white purse hung from her shoulder on a wide leather strap. Her simple dress was a light yellow in the fading light.

Julius watched the woman come around the car to the driver's side. When she opened the door, a light went on inside.

It lighted up the soft black leather seats.

She got into the car, showing long trim legs under her slim skirt. She slammed the door. It had a heavy, solid sound. It was wonderful, Julius thought.

She started the engine with a deep, powerful roar. She didn't gun the engine the way Julius would if it was his car.

Then she touched something on the dashboard, and another smaller motor started. The top lifted up and back and then folded itself neatly into a little place behind the back seat.

Julius stood up. He could see the neat black leather seats, but not very well because it was getting dark.

She put on the strong headlights, turned the blinker lights on for a left turn, and slowly pulled into the street. She moved off with a quiet purr of the motor, not with the screech of tires and the rumble that Julius would have made.

He watched until he couldn't see the big bar of red light that spread across the back of the car like a big sign.

Then he sat down again. He looked at the place where the car had parked. He could see it in his mind. A woman shouldn't drive a car like that. It was a man's car. Maybe she just borrowed it. Probably it was her husband's. Yeah. A woman wouldn't buy a car like that. It was too much, too special.

Some day, Julius would have a car like that himself. Some day.

For the next four weeks, the red convertible came every Monday evening. It came about seven-thirty and left about eight-thirty.

By the time the fifth week came, Julius was in love with that car. He just had to touch it. He couldn't stand it any longer.

This Monday, his family had gone to the park for a picnic with his aunt and her four kids. Julius said he didn't want to go. This time he was going to touch the red car.

Before it was time, Julius washed his hands carefully. He couldn't have dirty hands to touch a car like that.

As soon as the woman took her little suitcase and went into the house, Julius slowly and carefully crossed the street. He walked by the car once on the sidewalk.

Then he stepped close to the gleaming red fender. His hand was damp with sweat when he put it lightly on the cool, hard metal. Lightly he let his fingers follow the curve of the fender from the headlight to where it joined the body.

His heart leaped with love. What a wonderful feeling! He looked at the palm of his hand. No dust marked it. She must keep the car in a garage. Or maybe she has a man to clean it for her.

Julius would like a job like that. Just to be near the car would be enough. He touched the black top. It was pulled tight.

He let his hand pet the fender again. It was so smooth!

Then he bent to look inside the car. The dashboard was padded. Many dials shone in the padding. He would feel like a jet pilot looking at those when he drove. The windows were open!

He reached in with his hand and felt the back of the front passenger's seat. The leather was soft under his fingers. He pressed them in and noticed how thick and yet soft the padding was. What a car!

The fading light told him the woman would be coming soon. Julius stepped to the front of the car again. This time he let his hand feel the bright bumper. Every time he touched the car, he loved it more. How could he wait another week?

Slowly, hating to leave it, Julius went back across the street. He sat on the top step and relived the touch of the car.

When the woman came out, he longed to ask her to let him ride just a little way with her. But tonight her head was down. Her walk was slower than usual. She seemed tired. It is never a good idea to ask favors of grown-ups when they're tired. Julius knew that very well. It never worked out.

She got into the car, leaving the top up. She drove away. Julius felt empty and alone.

Three nights later, Julius went out to play ball with his friends. There was the red convertible!

He put his baseball stuff away. If she was going to come more often, Julius could not afford to waste time on baseball.

He checked the time. She must have just come. He looked in the living room of his house. Everybody was watching TV.

This time he was going to sit in it! Just for a minute. He wouldn't hurt it. He just had to feel that steering wheel in his hands.

Julius looked at his hands to see if they were clean enough. Then he walked across the empty street. He opened the door of the car and slid into the seat. Then he shut the door softly, loving the solid thunk it made as it closed. Nothing tinny about *this* car.

He looked around to see if anyone had heard the door shut. No one was on the street. They must have been watching TV.

Julius took a deep breath and then he put both his hands on the thin white steering wheel. A feeling went through him. It was a feeling he had never had before. It had something to do with pride and power and fear. Maybe it was a thrill. Julius knew people said that word. Maybe he was having a thrill!

Whatever it was, it was great. He tried turning the wheel a little. It would be easy to drive a car like this. The power steering and automatic shift made all cars easy to drive.

He looked down at the floor. The brake pedal and the gas pedal were covered with white rubber. They were easy to see against the black wool carpet of the floor. Carpet! How about that? He knew lots of houses without carpets, but this car had them. He touched the soft rich rug with his hand. Wow! You could drive barefoot in this car!

He put his right foot on the gas and his left foot on the brake. He looked down at the left side of the seat. There was a lever to push to make the seat move up. He knew that from watching TV. He could drive this car easy.

What if he did? What if he just started the engine and drove it about three or four feet? She wouldn't notice that little bit.

Julius pretended to put the key in the lock. He turned the key and started the engine. In his mind he could hear the deep, heavy rumble and he could almost feel the little tremble of the car, as if it couldn't wait to go.

He moved his hands around on the steering wheel, pretending to turn out and into the street. It would be so easy! Why, he could take it around the block in no time. She wouldn't know. She always stayed an hour. It would only take about five minutes to go around the block.

Julius closed his eyes to get the feel of the wheel in his hands so he could remember it better. Then he opened the door and slipped out, closing it softly behind him.

When the woman came out, he was sitting on his top step. He felt that he was doing her a favor to let her drive his car. It was *his* car now. He had touched it, sat in it, turned its steering wheel, pressed its pedals with his feet. She couldn't love it the way he did. It was his car. Someday he was going to drive it!

From that night on, Julius checked the car every time to see if she had left the key. She began to come every other night, then finally every night.

Sometimes Julius would see other boys go by the car. They would cross the street to look at it, or they would walk along on the other side very slowly. Once a tall guy he didn't know came up and kicked one of the tires. Julius wanted to fight him. He had all he could do to stay on the porch and be quiet. He didn't dare fight the tire-kicker because the woman might hear them. She might get scared and start to lock the car.

After that, whenever he saw the tall kid coming, he felt mad and jealous. He didn't want that guy to look at the car, *his* car.

Finally, on Monday when the car had been there eight nights in a row, it happened. She forgot the key!

This was the night! He'd better leave the key in the car while he got ready. She might remember it and come out. Best to leave it there. He would only be a minute.

Julius ran across to his house and up the front steps. He didn't have to be careful because his family was at the park again with his aunt. What luck! It was perfect!

He ran into his room and opened the closet. All the time he had planned to change into his good clothes. He couldn't drive a car like that looking like a bum off the street.

He moved smoothly, slipping easily into a white sport shirt and dress slacks. He pulled off his tennis shoes and put on his black leather shoes. He brushed his hair fast, and he was ready.

He ran through the living room and out onto the porch. He was down the steps and halfway across the street before he knew it. The car was gone!

He stopped. How could that be? She always stayed an hour. He ran back to look at the clock. It was still early. What lousy luck!

He sat down on the top step. It was awful to be so close and then miss it. He felt so bad he just couldn't sit still.

He walked step by step down to the sidewalk, shoved his hands in his pockets and went up the street. He didn't want to hang around and look at that empty space.

Maybe she wouldn't come back. Maybe he'd never get another chance. He turned up another street, heading for downtown.

A siren started somewhere far away. Julius wasn't interested tonight. He didn't want to see anything except that car.

The siren came nearer. Its shrill whistle drove through his thoughts. He turned to see what it was. Cop car, coming from behind him.

The brightly flashing red lights and the screaming siren brought people out of their houses all up and down the street. As it passed Julius and headed for downtown, kids began to run by him. They could tell by the sound of the siren that the car was stopping nearby.

Julius let them pass him. He walked along, hands bunched up in his pockets. Seeing some drunk get arrested or some old man get a ticket was nothing to driving the red convertible. Why hurry?

He turned the corner onto the main street and saw that the crowd was just ahead of him. A tall lightpole, the kind with a big cement base, bent over the crowd at a crazy angle. Somebody must have hit that pole, he thought.

And then he saw a little flash of red as the people moved around.

His heart sank as he ran closer. It was a red car. Was it *his* red car? He knew it was, even while he tried to tell himself it couldn't be.

The red convertible was upside down, its black top torn to pieces. Bits of the top flapped sadly in the evening wind. The side nearest Julius was scraped down to the bare steel. The door on the other side hung open, bent and broken.

Julius felt the pain of the car's hurts within himself. His hands twitched as he looked at the fenders. He had loved them when they were smooth. Now they were twisted and spoiled. He wanted to kneel down by his car and make it well again. He felt as if he had lost a friend, a living human friend.

Then he saw that the cop and a couple of men wearing white clothes were standing by somebody on the ground. The person was lying on the sidewalk near the bent pole. That must be the woman.

Julius moved in and out of the crowd until he was near enough to see. The person wasn't moving under the red blanket. Julius stared at the face. It was not a woman at all! It was the tall guy who kicked the tire! He was just about breathing.

The cop looked at the crowd.

"Do any of you live around here? We need someone to help us identify this boy."

A few hands went up around Julius. He didn't raise his hand. He didn't know who he was.

A man in the crowd worked his way to the cop.

"I know who he is," the man said.

"He lives in the six hundred block, on the corner of Woodward and Denver Street. His last name is hard to say, but I can show you the house." The man spoke quickly.

"Do you know if this is his car?" the cop asked.

"No, I don't think it is," the man said. "I think the car belongs to a nurse who takes care of an old lady. The old lady lives down the street from me. The kid must have been joyriding. His folks don't have a car."

"Thanks very much. I'd like you to take me to his house and also to the house where the nurse is. Can you do that?"

"Sure, be glad to." The man followed the cop to the black and white police car.

The hospital men picked up the boy and put him on a stretcher. They loaded him into the ambulance. They drove away, blowing the siren.

The crowd started to go away. Julius went back to look at the car.

Julius had to wink back the tears when a big, white tow truck came and put a big chain on the red convertible. He started for home before they turned it over to drag it to the junk yard.

Two nights later, when Julius came out to sit on the top step, there was a big, white car parked across the street.

He let his eyes follow the line. The lines were not as smooth as those of his red convertible. The fenders were heavy and the bumper didn't bend around the front the way Julius liked.

No, he thought, as he looked at the car. There'll never be another car like my red convertible.

CRAZY EDDIE

by **JACQUELINE LUDLUM**

The game is called bombardment. Like, it's great!

You team up with a bunch of guys at one end of the gym and wait for six or seven bullet-speed volleyballs to fly at you. Then you pick up a volleyball and fire it back at the other end of the gym. The idea is to catch the ball or dodge it. If you get hit, you have to wait it out on the sidelines.

No game for a meatball. Man, you learn fast how to fake out the throws. It's shape up or ship out.

Now I'm telling you all this so you grab what I tell you about that crazy cat, Eddie.

Eddie is a kooky bird. Man, how he digs bombardment. Just can't get enough of it. He must have been hit in the head once too often. Anyway, we all call him the Brown Bomber, 'cause he's so good at bombardment.

One day, a new man, cool as a sea breeze, blows in on the scene. First thing, he tries to smart off. Big brute, wears the mods, and goes bossin' around. You know, the whole bit.

He comes into the gym at the park and tries to take over. Gives with the orders.

"Call me Duke," he says to a bunch of us standing at one end of the gym.

Well, you can tell from just three words he thinks he's a Mr. All-time Big Shot.

Eddie is on the floor with some guys banging away till the ref blows the whistle for the real thing to start. We're pretty well steamed up after lots of practice.

This Duke picks out one of the half-filled volleyballs and looks it over. Nobody pays too much notice, but he says to me, "I play this down at my old territory. What you jerks need is a lesson."

With that, he cocks his arm back and bashes the dirty white thing against the wall sixty feet away. You just don't hear a crash like that every day. It could knock out a cement wall.

That noise brings the place to a standstill.

"See what I mean? You stink!" Duke grabs another ball and "Wham!" It hits the far wall only harder.

That does it. Every guy comes crowdin' around this Duke character.

"Hey, Man, that's great. Do it again."

"Like again."

All the guys yell one thing or another.

Duke takes off his black jacket with the velvet lapels and sets it on the bench careful-like. It seems like that jacket means the world to him.

With all of us hanging on to everything he says, Duke spits out, "Nobody, BUT NOBODY, plays this game good as me."

"I believe, I believe," I say, and the guys laugh, but we all believe.

He throws another volleyball to prove it.

At that second, old Eddie who is still on the floor, moves like a rocket and fields the flying bullet. Man, he's a toe dancer. Eddie keeps right on runnin' towards us. He flips it at Duke and says, "Except me. I can play it better."

"Put up, or shut up," says Duke sorta quiet.

Well, now we all know how Eddie likes the game, but this Duke is something else again.

Duke holds the ball as Eddie stands right in front of him — toes touching, no muscles moving, just lookin'.

The ref's whistle blows. "Line up. Take sides."

Things are gettin' interestin'. Eddie moves to the far side and Duke is playin' for us.

There is the whistle to start things rollin'.

Duke is wearin' a pair of tennies and his good pants. He yo-yo. Real hard to hit a moving target. Then the half-filled volleyballs come flyin' at us. No bunk, this new man is strictly first class. I keep watchin' Eddie and he is all the time aimin' for Duke. Duke dodges and fakes, or he catches the ball with no sweat at all. Then wham! he rifles it back, mostly at Eddie.

One time he gets so close to catching Eddie that I can't believe it. Nobody ever gets Eddie, but Eddie is dancin' too loose. He's beggin' for Duke to tag him like that.

By now the volleyballs are just a blur as they fly from side to side. Like I say, we got a rule. If you get hit or don't catch the ball, you got to sit on the sidelines. And I mean sit! You stand and you're fair game for one of the flyin' things.

I couldn't believe it. Duke catches one off Eddie's leg. That volleyball hits him like a jet. It bounces off Eddie and hits another guy. Both of them go off to the sidelines. Eddie is chewin' out Duke all the way.

Game goes on some more when Eddie gets real shook up with a ref's call. He stands up. That is a bad mistake.

I catch Duke out of the corner of my eye. "He's goin' to get Eddie," I says to myself. Quick as a cat, Duke winds up and slams the ball at Eddie. It gets Eddie right in the gut. I can almost feel it myself it's so bad. Sort of a thud. Then Eddie grunts low and slow. His knees give in.

Duke is smilin' a little. Eddie just kind a sits down. He has a funny look, a funny sad look.

Duke runs over to Eddie.

"Thanks, kid, for catchin' the ball. Never do it that way myself. But we all got a special style. Drop in again and watch me play. Okay?"

But you know, that Eddie never gives up. He comes back day after day and Duke wins day after day. Eddie says, "I can beat him. I'll beat him yet." Maybe he can.

That Eddie is a crazy guy.

THE MYSTERY OF THE GOLDEN LOCKET

by JANE SPRAGUE

"Look, Miss Harris, I'm getting tired of this," Ellie said. "Every time something disappears in the girls' gym, you think I took it. I don't take things, honest, Miss Harris. Why do you always call me?"

Miss Harris looked down at her own hands playing with the push-top of her ball-point pen.

Miss Harris looked down at her own hands playing with the push-top of her ball-point pen.

"Ellie, I hated to call you in, but your name was the first one the girls suggested. What can I do? How did you get this reputation with the girls?"

"Miss Harris, I don't know. I can't figure it out."

"Would you mind if I look in your locker for the bracelet?"

"Of course not. Go right ahead. And you can call my mother, too. She'll be mad, because I have been brought up not to steal things. She always says, 'We're poor, but we're honest!' She'll check in my room for you."

Miss Harris smiled at the troubled girl, sitting on the edge of the chair in the Girls' Vice-Principal's Office.

"Ellie, I'd rather not call your mother. I feel sure Barbara will find her bracelet. I'll check your locker just so I can tell her that I looked and I didn't find it.

"But, Ellie, try not to get involved in anything like this again."

"Yes, Miss Harris." Ellie felt like saying that she wasn't involved this time, but what was the use?

"You may sit in the outer office until I check your locker, Ellie. Then you may go back to class."

Miss Harris picked up her fat bunch of keys and left her office. She came back without the bracelet and gave Ellie a pass.

At lunch time, Ellie and her best friend, Marge, sat away from everybody else in the cafeteria.

"Marge, I've just *got* to find out who's stealing stuff during our gym period." Ellie put down the hamburger she was eating. She didn't feel hungry with all this mess on her mind.

"Ellie, I think it's somebody trying to make trouble for you."

Marge never let anything interfere with her lunch, not even her best friend's troubles. Marge was tall and thin, even though she ate like a truck driver.

"Who would want to make trouble for me? Who?" Ellie looked around at the girls in the cafeteria. Some she knew, some she didn't. Was the thief sitting right there, laughing about Ellie?

Marge finished her hamburger. "Do you want me to eat your hamburger?"

“Sure.” Ellie was hardly listening. “Marge, we have to make a plan.”

“Okay,” Marge tried to say with her mouth full.

“Here’s what we’ll do.” Ellie leaned over so only Marge could hear her. “The three things that were taken from the locker room were all jewelry — a watch, a bracelet, and a ring. So whoever it is, likes jewelry, right? And they were all new things, too.”

Marge nodded her head. Her mouth was full of chocolate pudding.

“Okay,” Ellie said. “Now your job will be to notice when any girl in our group gets something new, like a birthday watch or a necklace from a boy, stuff like that, okay?”

Marge drank some milk. “That’ll be easy to do. The girls always show their new things. They have to brag to everybody.”

“I know. Now, my job will be to find out who puts the finger on me. Then we’ll check her out first.”

Marge’s eyes began to sparkle. “I love mysteries! But what will we do when we catch her?” Marge bit into a crisp red apple.

“I don’t know. We have to find out who it is first, and why she’s doing it.” Ellie couldn’t see why anyone would want to make everybody think Ellie was a thief.

“When do we start?” Marge threw the apple core in the trash can.

“Right now. Keep your eyes open from now on.”

The girls left the cafeteria and went out to walk around in the sun for a few minutes before their afternoon classes.

Ellie had one final word for Marge. "If you see any new jewelry, let me know as soon as you can."

Several days went by and then right after the first period on Friday morning Marge found Ellie in the hall.

"Ellie, Sandra Jackson is wearing a beautiful gold locket. She got it for her birthday from her boyfriend."

"Who did she show it to?"

"Everybody! About a thousand people saw it already."

"Okay. Keep your eye on it. See you in gym."

When the girls got to the gym, they saw Sandra give the locket to her gym teacher. The teacher locked it in her desk.

Marge grunted. "Huh! Well, we won't have to worry about that thing today." The girls went to their lockers and started to change.

"No," said Ellie, "I guess not."

"Hey, Ellie, what are you going [illegible] weekend?"

"I think I'm going to the high school basketball game tonight."

"You are? Who are you going with?" Marge's voice sounded all squeezed up. She was sitting on the bench, tying her tennis shoes.

There was a lot of noise going on. Girls were putting their regular clothes into the wire baskets and locking them with combination locks. Everybody was rushing to beat the whistle. It was hard to hear.

"What did you say, Marge?" Ellie was just putting her head through the top of her white gym blouse.

"I said who are you going to the game with?"

"I *think* I'm going with James White." Just as Ellie said that, a sudden quiet hit the locker room. Everybody heard Ellie's words.

Just then the teacher blew the warning whistle. The girls screamed, and laughed and ran for the door to line up outside.

It wasn't until half the period had passed that Marge and Ellie had a chance to talk again.

"Hey, Ellie. I thought James White was sort of gone on Vicki Daniels."

"I guess he was. I don't know. He came over to a party at my house. It was my brother's birthday. I helped serve the food. Anyway, he started to call me up, and once in a while he walks me home from school. That's when the high school gets out early."

"Well, Miss A-8. You are something, dating a big ol' high school boy!" Marge pretended to bow down to Ellie.

Ellie laughed. It did make a girl feel good to have a goodlooking fellow taking her out.

"Now, cool it, Marge. We're just going to the game, with my brother and his girl."

When the bell rang for the showers, the girls ran inside, undoing buttons and unzipping zippers as they went.

The following Monday, the girls were in the locker room again, waiting for the final bell to ring. Marge was sneaking a few bites on her before-lunch candy bar, and Ellie was putting her lipstick on.

Suddenly, a tiny scream was heard. Several girls crowded around the girl who screamed. It was the girl with the golden locket.

"It's gone! I put in right there on my books so I could button my blouse. And now it's gone. Oh, how could anyone take my locket?" She began to cry.

"Here's your chance, Ellie." Marge and Ellie went nearer the crowd.

"Helen and Vicki Daniels are with her," Ellie whispered to Marge.

The gym teacher on duty in the locker room turned toward the noise. "What's the trouble?" she asked.

"Somebody took her lovely new locket," Vicki said.

"She had it right on her books, right here," Helen said.

The teacher frowned. "Well, if you don't give me valuable things like that to lock up, I'm afraid you're going to lose them every time."

She didn't sound very sympathetic, Ellie thought.

"Well, if people would just keep their hands off other people's property, everything would be safe." Vicki Daniels spoke loudly.

To Ellie, Vicki seemed upset. You'd think it was her locket, the way she looked, Ellie thought.

"That's right, Vicki," the teacher said. "Did you girls check on the floor, under the bench, in your purse, everywhere?"

The girls said they had.

"Well, go in the office," the teacher said, sounding pretty tired of this kind of problem.

Vicki and Helen let the girl into the office just as the bell rang.

"The rest of you will have to stay here, girls. Sit down right on the floor where you are. Miss Harris will come. We'll have to ask you to empty your purses and pockets. We'll have to check everyone. We can't have any more of this."

"That suits me fine," said Ellie. The other girls looked at her. They were sure she had taken the other things. They were sure she had taken the locket, too.

Ellie held her head up high. She knew they wouldn't find the locket near her. That would show them.

It took half of the next period to check the girls and give them all passes to their next class. Miss Harris didn't find the locket.

Just before lunch, Miss Harris sent for Ellie.

Ellie could feel all the girls in her class looking at her as she left the room. It made her so mad!

"Now, Ellie, We've got to get this thing straightened out. Sit down."

"Miss Harris, you checked over my things yourself! I didn't touch that locket!"

"You were seen near that girl."

Ellie was amazed. "Who saw me? Please, Miss Harris, tell me who says she saw me?"

"I can't tell you. But I have no reason to doubt her word."

"Do you have any reason to doubt mine?" Ellie felt the tears filling her eyes.

Miss Harris looked at her. "No, I haven't, Ellie."

"Listen then, Miss Harris. I think someone is trying to give me a hard time. Someone must have a reason. If we could think of the reason, we could figure it out."

"Maybe you're right. In any case, I think it would be a good idea to have you come here to my office during your gym period. If there is any more stealing, you won't be blamed."

"And if there isn't you and the girls will believe I did it." Ellie felt all boxed in. Why did this have to happen?

"If you'd just tell me who said she saw me near the locket, I'd know who is after me." Why couldn't Ellie make Miss Harris see that?

"I can't do that, Ellie. I promised I wouldn't."

"May I go to lunch, now?"

When Ellie found Marge, they sat outside on a bench away from the others.

"Goll-ee. Ellie. What are you going to do?" Marge asked.

"I don't know." Ellie was staring at her lunch. She wasn't eating it.

"Why does Miss Harris always call you?"

"Because somebody always puts the finger on me."

"Who? I'll kill her for you." Marge looked ready to start now.

"Thanks. That's just why Miss Harris won't tell me."

"But it's not fair. You were right beside me, twenty feet away when that girl screamed."

"I know, Marge." Ellie was thinking as hard as she could.

"Who was over there, though?" Marge spoke with her mouth full of garlic bread.

“Yes, who?” Ellie tried to see the scene in her mind.

“Helen. She was right there. And Vicki Daniels . . . and —”

“Wait a minute!” Ellie sat up straight. “Vicki Daniels!”

“What about her?” Marge started in on her cherry jello pudding.

“She was right there. And they didn’t search Helen or Vicki.” Ellie felt as if she was right on the edge of some truth.

“That’s right! They were in the office. I never thought about that.” Marge stopped with a spoonful of shaky jello halfway to her mouth.

“But why would Vicki want to make it seem like me? I don’t know her very well. How did she pick me out?” Ellie didn’t believe people could do something mean without a reason.

“You must have done something to her,” Marge said.

No, I haven’t ever . . . Oh!”

“What’s the matter?” Marge stopped peeling her orange to look at Ellie.

“*I* haven’t done anything to her. But James White has. And she’s blaming me.” Ellie’s voice softened. “She thinks I stole her boyfriend. She’s trying to get me sent away from this school.”

“Aw, you’re dreaming.”

“No, I’m not. Remember what she said in the gym? Something about people keeping their hands off other people’s property.”

“Oh yeah, now I remember.” Marge tried to wipe the sticky orange juice from her fingers with a Kleenex.

"And I remember thinking she sounded as if it was *her* locket." Ellie felt more and more sure it was Vicki. "But she wasn't talking about the locket. She was talking about James White!"

"You mean she was stealing things just to get even with you for going around with James?" Marge couldn't believe it.

Ellie nodded her head.

"But how can you prove it?"

That was going to be hard. As the bell rang to go to classes, Ellie walked along. Then suddenly, she had an idea. She turned around.

"Marge, I'm going to see Miss Harris. You get my assignment for me, okay?"

"Sure. Good luck."

Sitting in front of the desk, Ellie told Miss Harris all about James White, the birthday party, the game at the high school.

"Now, Miss Harris, I don't know if Vicki is the one who has been giving you my name or not. But I do know you didn't check Vicki or Helen."

Miss Harris frowned. "We didn't mean to miss anyone."

"Well, the other time when you called me down here, you asked me if you could look in my locker. Remember?"

"Yes, I remember."

"Then why don't you call Vicki down here right now, before she has time to take the locket home? Ask her if you can look in her hall locker and her gym locker. Okay?"

"And if I don't find anything?"

"Then you'll know Vicki isn't the one. But she's the only one I can think of."

Miss Harris picked up her phone and asked the attendance office man to find Vicki and walk back with her.

"Be sure that she brings her purse, jacket, or whatever she has — and her books, please. And don't let her talk to anyone before she leaves the class. And please don't let her use her locker. Thanks a lot." She hung up the phone.

"Ellie, I'm going to take your suggestion. I know you want to clear your name. And I want to stop this stealing."

"Thanks, Miss Harris." Ellie felt her heart beating faster. "Do you want me to stay?"

"Yes, I think so."

When Vicki walked into the office and saw Ellie sitting there, she looked as if she might faint.

Miss Harris explained to Vicki that she had not been checked as the others had.

"Now it is your turn, Vicki. And since you've had time to go to your locker, we'll look in there first. Do you mind?"

"Oh, no . . ." Vicki swallowed. "Go right ahead." She held her head up high.

Some actress, Ellie thought. Would Miss Harris let her off?

"Suppose we all go and look. Ellie has some interest in this, too. She is very eager to clear her name." Miss Harris got up and picked up her keys. "You lead the way, Vicki."

When they got to the locker, Miss Harris let Vicki work the combination instead of using a key.

Ellie saw that Vicki's hand was trembling so that she had to do the combination twice. The poor kid is scared to death, Ellie thought.

Miss Harris must have noticed it, too. Her voice sounded sad and a little colder.

"Take all the things out slowly, Vicki. Let Ellie hold them."

Vicki reached in with both hands. She took out notebook, textbooks, an empty gym bag, and a sweater, giving each thing to Ellie without looking at her. Then with the tears streaming down her face, she reached back into the dark corner and handed Miss Harris the missing watch, the ring, the bracelet and the golden locket!

Miss Harris looked at Ellie and seemed proud of her. Then she looked at Vicki. The tears were getting worse. "Put your things back, Vicki. Let's go back to my office!"

When they were back downstairs, and Vicki had stopped crying so hard, Miss Harris said, "Now let's get this all cleared up with everybody today."

Vicki nodded her head and Ellie smiled.

"I'm going to call all the owners of these things down here. And Vicki, you are going to tell them what happened. You've got to clear Ellie completely. Then we'll all go to the gym and set the gym teacher straight. After that, Ellie will go back to class and I will take you home so I can talk to your mother, Vicki."

Vicki began to sob again.

"She didn't really steal the things, Miss Harris, not to keep," Ellie said softly. "She was just upset about James. She didn't know that a boy isn't like a . . . a locket. He's not property somebody can steal. He's a person. He has a right to do what he likes. If Vicki wants him to go with her, all she has to do is treat him like a person. He just didn't like to feel owned. At least, that's what I think." Ellie wondered if she had said too much.

Miss Harris smiled.

Vicki blew her nose and tried to smile at Ellie, too.

"I'm . . . I'm . . . so . . . sorry, Ellie. I don't know what got into me." She choked with sobs again.

"That's okay, Vicki. It's all cleared up now."

That night after school, Ellie walked out of the door with Marge. It was funny to see the way all the girls smiled at Ellie or waved or went out of their way to say something.

"See, they like you better than ever." Marge said, licking her after-school popsicle.

"Yeah," was all Ellie said. She was too busy trying to eat her ice-cream sandwich before it dripped.

LEGENDARY AMERICANS

by ROBERT CRUMB

JOHN HENRY, A GOOD GUY

And a man ain't nothin' but a man,
But before I let that steam drill beat me down
I'm gonna die with my hammer in my hand,
O Lord! Gonna die with my hammer in my hand.

John Henry is more than a hero of a song or the central figure in many tall tales. He is the spirit of the working American, big, rugged, and unbeatable.

John Henry was as tall as the big pine that grew in his home state of Tennessee. He was as quick as a mountain cat and he could see to the horizon. He had dark brown skin, the color of the earth.

John Henry was a steel drivin' man. That is, he swung the hammer that broke the rocks to clear the pathways for the railroads.

He was a big man, six feet four inches tall and weighed two hundred and thirty pounds. When John Henry lifted his twelve-pound hammer, the mountains cried for mercy.

When John Henry did a really hard job, crowds would gather to see him work. It was better than the circus come to town.

Children who lived along the tracks often said to their mothers, "I'm gonna go on down and watch John Henry drive his drill today, Mama."

All of the young ones (and the old ones, too) would gather around and watch him swing his hammer, driving the drill into solid rock.

John had a wife by the name of Polly. It was almost as big a treat to see her work. Sometimes John Henry would put in a twelve-hour day, never stopping that swinging hammer. He would feel a little tired the next day and send Polly down to take his place. The people building the railroad liked this, for work would not be slowed down. Polly could swing that hammer almost as well as John. Folks said it was lucky that John and Polly got along so well at home, or things might have been very dangerous at times.

One day, when the steel drivin' men were making a tunnel through a hard rock mountain, John Henry's boss brought in a steam drill. It hurt John Henry to see that steam drill. He told his boss that he could beat a steam drill any day.

So, they arranged a contest. John Henry started at one end of the tunnel and the steam drill at the other. They were to work for half an hour and then measure the distances they had driven through the rock.

In that half hour John Henry's hammer whistled through the air like an Indian arrow. He smashed and swung, and rock flew in all directions. The sweat ran off his brow and ran down his naked chest. The muscles stood out on his huge arms and rippled down his brawny back. His hammer hit the rock, blow after blow, like a clattering machine gun.

The people cheered him on. They shouted, "Go, John Henry! You can't be beat by this darned new drill!"

John Henry wouldn't be beat. With all his great strength, his great pride, and his great heart, he pounded his way through fourteen feet of rock. The steam drill made only nine feet.

When they shot off the gun at the end of a half hour, John Henry laid down his hammer and stretched himself out beside it. John Henry's great heart gave out, and he died with his hand wrapped around the handle of his hammer.

They buried him beside the railroad tracks so that when the trains passed, the engineers could blow the whistle to greet John Henry and say, "There lies a man! A steel drivin' man!"

BILLY THE KID, A BAD GUY

Oh, beat the drum slowly and play the fife lowly,
Play the dead march as you carry me along,
Take me to the green valley and lay the sod o'er me,
For I'm a young cowboy and I know I've done wrong.

William H. Bonney is better known as Billy the Kid. Since his death, Billy the Kid has become a hero rather than what he was. He was what we might call a juvenile delinquent. He was more than that however; he was a cold, ruthless killer who started out killing without thinking and never changed.

Billy was born in New York in 1859 but moved with his family from there to Kansas, and a short time later to New Mexico.

In New Mexico, at the age of twelve, he killed a man for insulting his mother. Without thinking, he stabbed the man with a knife. He started running and ran for the rest of his short life.

Soon the knife was replaced with a gun, in fact, with two guns. It has been said that Billy was never a good shot. He believed that the man who fired fastest and threw the most lead lived the longest. If you shot enough bullets around, one would hit the target. This idea kept him alive until he was twenty-one years old.

Billy's victims became notches on his gun handles. His reputation as a cold-blooded killer grew. He was hired in the Lincoln County range war as a gunfighter. A gunfighter was a man paid to kill. And William Bonney didn't mind killing for a living.

In this range war Billy became a central figure. It is sometimes called the "Billy the Kid" war.

One afternoon Billy captured two men and was taking them in to his boss. They foolishly tried to escape, and he shot them both. His best friend, who was riding with him, scolded him for the senseless killing. Billy couldn't stand a scolding and shot him, too.

The sheriff heard of the three killings and came to get Billy. The sheriff, a lawman of many years, had not counted on Billy's speed with guns.

He never brought Billy back to town. As a matter of fact, he never returned to town himself. He and his deputy fell dead before Billy's smoking guns.

And Billy ran. He was to be a hunted man until the end of his days. He led a large band of outlaws who hid out in the mountains of New Mexico.

Billy's gang would swoop down on the little frontier towns and take everything that they could get their hands on and then return to their mountain hideout. After many raids the gang was broken up, and Billy the Kid began his last days wandering alone.

Sheriff Pat Garrett was out to get him. If Billy the Kid was a mad-dog killer, Pat Garrett was a fox. He knew Billy's guns, fast and without mercy. Garrett knew he could not face them head on — and yet, Billy must be brought in, feet first if necessary. He had killed too many. To Pat Garrett, Billy was the ruthless killer of twenty-one men, not a hero.

Billy had holed up in a Mexican home near Fort Sumner, New Mexico. He was the guest of a Mexican family who probably felt sorry for him.

Garrett had watched him for days but never had the chance to take him. One night, while Billy was eating with the family in the kitchen, Garrett slipped into Billy's room across the patio.

He sat on Billy's bed and waited. He heard footsteps approaching across the stone floor of the patio. Suddenly Billy's figure was outlined in the doorway by the moonlight behind him. Garrett's gun roared twice and Billy fell. His six shooters were already in his hands. At twenty-one, with twenty-one murders to his credit, he died with his boots on and his weapons ready to kill again. He lived by the gun. He died by the gun, Billy, the delinquent kid.

DORIE MILLER, A HERO

Doris Miller was born in a sharecropper's cabin outside of Waco, Texas, in 1919. As a boy he did a man's work in the cotton fields. When he was fourteen years old, his parents decided they would send him to high school. While attending Moore High School, he was not only a good student but a football star. Perhaps that's why he is called Dorie. Who could call a football hero Doris?

After high school, Dorie wanted to get out and see the world, so he joined the Navy. Imagine his disappointment to find that he could never do anything but work in the kitchen or serve in the officers' mess! At that time the U. S. Navy did not allow Negroes to work as anything but a cook or mess attendant. Dorie was upset, but he did his work the best he knew how.

On December 7, 1941, Dorie was sleeping peacefully aboard the *U.S.S. West Virginia* when the Japanese attacked.

When he heard the dive bombers and the explosions, he rushed topside. The ship was already in flames and his Captain lay dying on the bridge.

Fighting his way through smoke and flame, Dorie rushed to the Captain and carried him to safety.

He looked into the smoke-filled sky and saw swarms of attacking planes. He saw, too, that the big guns on the ship were unmanned. The ship was a sitting duck in the waters of Pearl Harbor.

Running across the deck which was strewn with the bodies of dead and dying men, Dorie mounted the gun, a gun he had never been allowed to touch. Though the bridge was a mass of flames, Dorie stayed with the weapon until he had downed four enemy planes.

Admiral Nimitz himself pinned the Navy Cross on Dorie's chest with these words:

> Dorie Miller, Mess Attendant Second Class, for distinguished devotion to duty, extraordinary courage and disregard for his own personal safety during the attack on the fleet in Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii, by Japanese forces on the seventh of December, nineteen forty-one. While at the side of his Captain on the bridge, MILLER, despite enemy strafing and bombing and in the face of a serious fire, assisted in moving his Captain who had been mortally wounded, to a place of greater safety, and later manned and operated a machine gun directed at the enemy Japanese attacking aircraft until ordered to leave the bridge.

After this great act of courage Dorie went back to the kitchen. He became a Mess Attendant First Class, then Cook, Third Class.

He saw action in many battles in the Pacific during the war. He was awarded, in addition to the Navy Cross, the Purple Heart, two Bronze Stars, and all of the regular medals.

On November 24, 1943, the *U.S.S. Pacific* engaged the Japanese in a major battle for the Gilbert Islands. The ship on which Dorie was serving, the *U.S.S. Liscombe Bay*, was hit and went to the bottom with all on board. Dorie was listed as "missing in action" and later presumed dead.

But the likes of Dorie Miller never die. People named schools and playgrounds after him, but that was not the most important thing. The story of Dorie Miller shows again that the color of your skin does not determine your courage, your loyalty, or your ability.

The Negro is no longer kept in the kitchen in the great American Navy. Dorie helped to prove that all men are equal. He died for what he believed in, and as a result, he will live forever.

PAUL BUNYAN, A SYMBOL

American folk heroes are bigger than life. They were created at a time when the country was feeling its muscles, spreading across the continent to become the most powerful nation in the world.

Paul Bunyan stands for the big, brawling, good-humored American. Surely, Paul is bigger than life. He is far too big to be real. And he had more adventures than any real person could have. Tales of Paul and his big blue ox, Babe, are endless.

Paul was born in Maine. While he was growing up, folks wondered if there would ever be any end to his growing. He grew taller and taller. His shoulders grew wider and wider. His muscles got bigger and bigger. He became a giant. He just had to become a lumberjack. At an early age he could cut down whole trees with a single swing of his axe. He used small trees as toothpicks.

It didn't take Paul long to cut down the forests of the East. Then, like all Americans, he got restless. He looked toward the western horizon. While heading for the California redwoods, he stopped off in the huge forests of the Great Lakes region. These large forests were a challenge to Paul, and here is where most of the fantastic stories about him started.

Paul's pal on his journey was Babe, a big blue ox, indeed, the biggest ox in the whole world.

Paul dug Lake Michigan as a water hole for Babe and created the Mississippi River one day when he was tired and let his pick drag on the ground behind him.

Once when a giant logjam had blocked a river, Babe waded in (the water came just above his hoofs) and started swinging his tail around in the water until he made a giant whirlpool. The whirlpool sucked all the water upstream and broke the logjam.

Of course, Paul, because of his huge size and outdoor life, had a giant appetite. The logging company had to build a kitchen for him to hold a stove that was twenty-four feet long and four feet wide. They hired three boys to skate around on top of the stove with bacon rinds on their feet, just to keep it greased. It took four cooks working overtime to keep Paul fed. Pancakes were Paul's favorite food. He could eat three hundred and thirty-three at a single sitting.

Paul Bunyan's friends—Johnny Inkslinger, his bookkeeper, and Sam Sourdough, his cook — have stories told about them that are almost as wild as Paul's.

Everything about Paul led to bigger and bigger tales of such things as packs of man-eating wolves, huge flies, and even giant mosquitoes.

Because of all his exciting adventures, Paul Bunyan could never die. Pioneers dreamed him up and who could ever think of letting him die? He lives on today as he did in the past, walking this earth in search of new forests to clear and new adventures to have. He walks on as the hero and symbol for those who work in the great woods.

ROBERT SMALLS AND THE AMAZING ESCAPE

by JEAN E. TAGGART

It was midnight. The water of Charleston harbor was smooth. The night was still. A faint moon scarcely made any light along the wharves.

Robert Smalls, the Negro fireman on the steamboat *Planter*, stood quietly in the shadows on its deck. He was ready to carry out his carefully laid plans.

For months during the Civil War, he had worked on these plans to get his wife and children, and those of his brother John, out of Charleston. He was going to take them through the Union lines to safety. They would be free from the whippings and the cruelty of the slave masters.

The Negro crew had made a pact in case they were caught by the Confederates. They would blow up the *Planter*, and themselves with it, if necessary. They would link hands on deck and jump into the water, hoping for rescue by the Union Navy. Or, if they died, it would be better than to be taken back to masters who refused to free them.

All was ready. On the deck, Robert waited for the final step of his plan to be carried out.

He wore the old straw hat and the gold-braided jacket that belonged to the white Captain Relyea. In the darkness, the hat and the jacket made Robert look like the white Captain. Robert was stocky and short, like the Captain. Robert hoped to pass for the white man.

As Robert waited on the deck, he watched the other Negro crewmen at their stations. They were waiting for Robert's orders, for he now was the captain and the pilot. At the word from him, the *Planter* would be on its way to freedom.

Each time dogs barked along the wharf, sweat broke out all over Robert's skin. His powerful body tensed. His heart beat crazily in his chest. He feared for the safety of his wife and children, for whom he waited. Sheltered by the dark of the night, they were to board the *Planter*.

Robert's ears caught stealthy movements on the dimly lit wharf. He padded to the rail. A shadow moved from bale to bale of the stacked cotton. The dim figure took refuge behind an ammunition keg as the moon suddenly glowed too brightly.

Robert looked up. Ragged black clouds began to slip across the face of the moon again. The moonlight dimmed. Robert let out his breath softly. The shadow came nearer and was joined by others. There were several figures now. Robert stretched out his arms. One by one, he helped his children aboard, and then his wife, with their baby in her arms. The pressure of his arms was his silent, joyful greeting. Then he led them into the hold of the steamer to join the other runaway families.

The fear in his tensed body lessened. Relief took its place. Everyone was safely aboard; yet, there still was danger ahead.

Earlier that day, Robert had tied up the children's clothes in a white bed sheet. This he had slung over his back and had gone aboard as though he were taking on the crew's laundry. While he was gone, the rest of the men had stacked twenty cords of wood in the engine room. The steam was now ready for the early morning trip to Fort Riley. The cannons that were to be delivered there had been tied to the deck.

These tasks had been the orders of Captain Relyea. Robert now thought, "The Captain will never know until too late that he has lost the *Planter* forever." A low chuckle rose in his throat.

It was time now. Robert ordered the fireman to build up the steam in the boilers. Then he softly ordered one of the crew to untie the moorings. Quietly, with strings attached to the cables, the mooring lines were lowered gently into the calm water. Not a ripple, not a sound could be heard.

Another member of the crew raised the Palmetto Flag of South Carolina, then the Stars and Bars. Robert, in the pilot's house, took the *Planter* out of its berth. The former cotton-steamer, now a gunboat for the South, headed toward the sea. Slowly, Robert allowed the steamer to glide along, just as Captain Relyea did when he left the harbor. In the early morning, the Captain often took her out to the open sea to gain information about the enemy. It was not unusual for the *Planter* to be out this early.

At Fort Johnson, Robert gave the usual whistle salute. The unsuspecting sentry did not question him, but passed him with a wave of his hat.

Robert blessed his knowledge of navigation. Carefully, he had watched the Captain as he piloted the steamer. Robert was very bright, and he soon had learned to pilot it himself.

Steadily, the *Planter* chopped through the calm water. All was going well.

They passed Fort Moultrie. Fort Sumter was next. Robert, with the straw hat shadowing his face, leaned out the window of the pilot's house, just as he had so often seen the Captain do. It would be a familiar figure to the watching sentries.

The guns of Sumter loomed ahead. As the steamer passed them, Robert looked down into their awesome muzzles. His hands trembled a little. Below, the crew waited in dead silence.

Then Robert raised his hand. The steam signal let out three blasts. It seemed a long time before the reply came from Sumter. Then, finally, Robert heard the welcome words, "Pass the *Planter*." And the joyous Robert steered his ship past the Fort, out toward the open Atlantic. Three more miles to go.

Finally, they were out of range of the big guns. Only then did Robert order full steam ahead. The ship surged forward with a burst of speed. Too late, the sentries saw that something was wrong. Why did the *Planter* suddenly pick up speed? This wasn't like Captain Relyea, who proceeded cautiously in enemy waters.

Robert pulled down the Confederate flag. Up went the white sheet; and, as a flag of truce, it unfurled gloriously in the wind. And a Union ship, the *U.S.S. Onward,* moved slowly toward the *Planter.*

Then from the *Onward*, came the order, "Stay away from the guns, or we'll blow you to bits."

Another command: "State your business."

Robert replied, elated, in a husky voice. "The *Planter* has come to join the Union Navy."

There was a long pause. One of the officers of the *Onward* climbed aboard. Robert presented the steamer to the Union captain. The Stars and Stripes were raised in place of the flag of truce, as the men stood at attention.

As the dawn's light appeared on the horizon, the runaway Negroes found freedom, and rejoiced.

Robert succeeded in carrying out his plan because he had worked it out carefully, to the smallest detail. He had studied every movement of the white captain in order to act as the captain had acted. He had not acted until he was sure the captain and his white mates would stay away all night. His plan had worked because it was thorough and sensible.

The United States government awarded prize money to the members of the *Planter* crew for delivering the steamer and guns. Robert went on to serve in the Union Navy until the war ended. His knowledge of the Confederate gun emplacements and harbor activities made him invaluable to the Union. During the war, Robert was cited for "gallantry, meritorious action," and was promoted to the rank of captain.

Later, Robert became interested in a political life. Through his influence as a state representative, he helped to establish free public schools in South Carolina.

Robert Smalls, a daring hero, was greatly respected by both white and Negro people. He is an inspiration to all Americans.

NIGHT ADVENTURE

by ROBERT CRUMB

"Okay, teach, where's that thing you were talkin' about, that Buckadora, or whatever it is?" Tommy asked.

"The name is Mr. Cole, Tommy."

"Yeah, Mr. Cole, where is it?" Tommy asked again.

"And it's La Bufadora, if you want to be right," Mr. Cole said.

"Okay, okay, but where is it?"

"It won't be long now. Just hold your horses."

"What horses?" Tommy snapped back.

"Don't be so smart," Mr. Cole said, "and I don't want any trouble from you, get me? I've been taking my stage crew on this trip for five years and I've never had any trouble."

Gary, who was between them on the seat of the truck, broke in. "He'll be all right, Mr. Cole. The rest of us guys will watch him."

"I hope so. If there's any trouble we won't be going again," Mr. Cole said.

"Big deal," Tommy said with a sullen look on his face.

They rode on in silence. Mr. Cole thought of the many times he had taken his stage crew on this outing as a reward for a hard year's work. They had never given him anything to worry about before. But then, he had never taken a boy like Tommy.

Tommy, no bigger than a minute, had a mind like a steel trap and could always manage to make trouble. Mr. Cole thought how lucky he was to have Gary with him. Gary was steady and reliable.

The other boys, who rode in the back, Aaron, Auzheal, and Willie, were reliable students, too.

"Where's the ocean?" Tommy demanded of Mr. Cole.

"Just wait up, kid," Mr. Cole answered as he took a right turn where the road divided.

They began to climb. The truck zipped up the road, ascending the cactus-covered hills. As they passed through a deep cut in the hill, Gary shouted, "There it is!"

Sure enough, hundreds of feet below them, at the base of the hill, was the ocean.

"Big deal," Tommy said again, "it's just an overgrown lake."

They continued to climb, twisting in and out. The narrow road snaked its way up the hills which had now become mountains. The fields of cactus were broken by big ledges of rock.

"We're pretty high up," said Gary, shivering a little. For the first time, Tommy smiled. "I like it," he said.

Hundreds of feet below them, clinging to the jagged cliffs, were palm-thatched huts. To the boys, high on the mountain road, they looked like houses made of match sticks.

"That's it. That's La Bufadora," said Mr. Cole.

"I don't see nothin' but a bunch of shacks," came Tommy's reply.

When they reached the huts, Mr. Cole braked the truck to a stop on a wide spot in the rocky road. The boys jumped out, tumbling over one another on the way.

"Where is it?" Willie asked as he piled out.

"There," Mr. Cole pointed.

The boys headed in the direction of his finger. Below the huts, there was a steep cliff. People were standing about, some alone, some in groups. All of them were looking into a crack in the side of the cliff.

The crew scrambled toward them, half running, half crawling their way down the slope. They reached the first of the people ringed about the strange thing below them. Suddenly, the boys, too, froze.

The cliff began to shake. A slowly rising roar drowned out all other sounds. The people became frozen to the ground. There was a bursting blast like the sound of a cannon. From the cliff, water, as if it came from a huge garden hose, shot hundreds of feet into the air. The wind caught it and turned it into spray as it settled back to earth. There was quiet again.

The boys moved forward more carefully this time. When they reached the place where the more daring people were standing, they looked over the cliff. There, a hundred feet deep, was a crack in the rock. Its water-splashed sides became more and more narrow until they disappeared beneath clouds of mist. Below the mist, unseen by the human eye, was a hole running from the ocean, through the rock, and opening out on the cliffside. This hole, carved by the pounding waters over thousands of years, acted as a funnel. The waves would smash against the cliff. The water would be forced through the hole, then through the great force, shoot high into the sky. This was La Bufadora, the blowhole.

Tommy's face brightened after watching the thrilling display. Then the ground began to rumble again. The other boys, shaking with fright, ran like the wind, but Tommy stood his ground.

Tommy turned to the others, soaked from the spray. There was water dripping from his smiling face. "Golly, gee-whiz! Ain't it the greatest!" he said. "She just shoots up in the air, b-r-r-r-room! Crash! Bang! I thought the darned old cliff was going to fall apart. How do you think it works, Gary?" he asked.

"I don't know. Let's ask Mr. Cole," Gary answered.

"I'd like to get down there and give it the once over. Do you think a guy could get down there?" Tommy was very excited.

"I don't think so. Don't think about it." Gary tried to put him off.

"Heck, I think I could get down the sides," Tommy rattled on.

Gary started to get angry. "You heard what Mr. Cole said. You better not cause any trouble. Do you want to ruin this trip for all the guys that come after us? You must remember that, Tommy. You could get hurt going down there. More than likely you'd get killed. Now, remember that!" With that he turned and walked away.

The boys discovered the huts were not homes, but open air restaurants that served delicious, golden-brown fish and cold drinks. An hour later they sat with Mr. Cole in one of the little cafes overlooking the ocean.

"Where's Tommy?" Mr. Cole asked.

Gary nodded toward the cliff. Mr. Cole looked and in the distance saw the small figure standing there. He was still looking into the blowhole.

Mr. Cole took a last bite of the fish he was eating and said, "I'd better go down and get him." Then he headed down the cliff.

"Boy, this is paradise!" said Auzheal.

"Yes," Willie picked up, "and this fish is the living end."

"Wait until we tell the dudes back home about this," Willie said. "A restaurant without walls!"

Auzheal stood up as if he was going to make a speech. "Blue, blue is the sky. Warm, warm is the sun. Cool, cool is the breeze. Green, green is the . . ."

"Aww, shut up!" Willie snapped. "Are you crazy or something?"

"No, I'm a poet," answered Auzheal, pretending to be hurt.

"Yes, and your feet show it," Aaron filled in.

"You've got a big understanding," Willie finished.

"You guys are fun-ny," Gary kidded. "Look down there. That's where we camp tonight," he said as he pointed at a sweeping stretch of beach below them.

"When we pitch the tent I'll amuse you with my poetry," Auzheal laughed.

"You'd better not," Willie said as the boys stood up and ran to join Tommy and Mr. Cole who were already waving to them from the truck.

The dark came quickly when the sun went down.

"Get some sleep, boys," Mr. Cole said, "I'm going to sleep in the camper just in case you want to talk all night. Pleasant dreams."

"Goodnight, Mr. Cole," they answered in a chorus.

The campers didn't stay awake too long this night. They were tired from the long drive and drugged by the salty ocean air. It was a far cry from the smog of Los Angeles.

Overhead, a full moon lighted the world of La Bufadora Bay. The people were all asleep in their tents now, except one. A small shadow scampered over the rocks as he headed for the blowhole.

Gary awoke with a start. "Tommy?" he whispered. He turned over and looked at the cot next to his. It was empty! In an instant he was on his feet, struggling into his jeans. Gary knew that Tommy could be only one place and he didn't like the idea of it.

He raced up the slope to the huts and over the rocks to the cliffside. Running, falling, sliding, and skinning his knees and elbows, he finally reached the edge. Tommy was nowhere to be seen!

Then, far below, he heard a lonely voice echoing off the slippery walls.

"Help! Help!" It was Tommy!

Gary leaned over the edge and called down, "Tommy, it's Gary. Can you hear me?"

"Yes, I can hear you. Help me, Gary. Please . . . help me . . . I can't get up, the rocks are too slippery."

Just then the ground began to shake, the roar started, the water shot forth. Gary heard a gurgling scream. It was quiet again.

"Tommy, you all right?"

Tommy's voice was choked with water. "It's getting worse every time. I think the tide is coming in. I'm going to drown!"

Gary was trying to think. Surely, as the tide came in the water in the hole would get higher and higher and the force of the spout would be greater! Tommy wouldn't have a chance.

"I'll be back. I'm going to get help." Gary called.

"Don't leave me. I'm scared." Tommy pleaded.

"I have to. It's the only way." Gary bounded up the cliff and headed for camp.

Tommy, wedged between the rocks, looked above to see the moon riding over him. He was trapped! The slippery walls wouldn't let him climb up, and at his feet the water rose higher and higher. The tide was coming in, and soon the swirling water would cover him. Each time a wave forced through the hole, it threw him against the walls. The water covered him, raced past him, and spouted into the sky. When he could breathe again, he would wipe the water, or tears, from his eyes.

"Why did I do it?" he asked himself. He had wanted to get closer, to see how it worked. He loved the danger, but now he had too much of it. He wished Gary hadn't left him even though it was the only hope. He was so afraid, so alone. The water came in again.

He thought, "What will Mr. Cole say when I get back? If I get back?" And the water came in again.

"Anybody's a fool to come in here, alone at least. Where's Gary? It seems like he has been gone for hours." And once again the water came in.

Gary wasted no time. His mind was working as his legs took him back to camp. He burst into the tent. "Don't wake Mr. Cole," he cautioned. "Take down the tent and give me all the rope you can get your hands on. And hurry! For God's sake, hurry!"

"What's the matter?" Willie asked sleepily.

"Tommy is trapped in the blowhole. The tide is coming in. He can't last much longer!" Gary answered quickly.

"Wouldn't you know," Auzheal whispered as he jumped up. That was all that was said.

Never had the stage crew worked so much as a team. Never had they taken orders from their stage manager so easily. They flattened the tent in seconds.

"Here, tie these ropes together. We need one long rope," Gary said, tossing them to Aaron and Willie.

He and Auzheal removed the rest of the rope and tied those together. In a short time they were on their way to the cliff.

Tommy looked up wearily as he heard his friends clattering across the rock.

"We're here, kid. We got a rope. I'm letting down. Are you with me?" Gary said calmly.

"I'm with you," Tommy gasped.

Gary dropped the rope down between the walls. "Can you reach it?" he shouted.

"No, it's too high!"

"Auzheal, get a hold on my legs," Gary ordered, "I'm going over the edge."

They made a human chain. Willie hanging on to Aaron, Aaron to Auzheal, Auzheal to Gary, and Gary to the rope which still dangled beyond the reach of Tommy.

Gary grunted, "Have you got it?"

"I can't quite reach it. Just a little more . . . a little more, please!" Tommy pleaded.

"Stretch, boy, stretch! I can't go any farther," said Gary, who was almost upside down.

Tommy stretched until his arms almost came out of their sockets. He almost had it that time! He made a swipe at it and missed. Once again he made a pass. He touched it but couldn't get a hold.

"STRETCH kid!" The others shouted from the top.

He stretched . . . reached! He had it!

"I got it!" he yelled as he clutched wildly, trying to get a better hold.

He tugged at the rope to see if it was strong enough.

"It's okay, we're braced!" Gary called down.

As Tommy started up the rope the ground began to rumble. Rapidly, hand over hand, he climbed up. His feet fumbled against the slimy walls as the rope swung and twisted back and forth.

The rumbling had become a roar. That water was coming! He was near the top when the spout shot up. It hit him in the seat of the pants and threw him over the edge. He landed squarely on top of Gary.

"You made it, kid," was all Gary said. That was enough.

Morning came with a burst of sun on the ocean.

"Are you kids ever going to get up?" Mr. Cole called through the door. "And who put up this tent? It looks like you pitched it in the dark.

The boys began to stir sleepily. Tommy sat up, bleary-eyed.

Mr. Cole began folding up the flaps. "Tommy, you look like death warmed over. Get out of the sack. The sun is out and the ocean is wild."

In the distance the cannon shot of La Bufadora sounded.

"Hear that, Tommy?" Mr. Cole continued. "That's La Bufadora calling you."

Tommy opened one eye. "It's calling, but I can't hear. You can't answer what you can't hear."

Mr. Cole acted surprised. "That's the first time I've ever seen you without a ready answer. By the way, I need some wood for a fire. Would you mind getting it, Tommy?"

"Sure, why not?" Tommy answered. "Where do I find it?"

"Check with the cafe on the cliff," Mr. Cole said.

"Okay, as soon as I get dressed."

Tommy jumped out of his cot, slipped into his clothes, and scrambled up the cliff in the morning sun.

THE DAY

by JACQUELINE LUDLUM

"I don't hear nothin'," said the boy.

"Listen some more. I know I heard it. I know I did. It has been a long time — a long time, but it sounded like a bird singing." The old man put a hand around his ear to cup in any sound.

"Grandpa, you crazy or somethin'? Birds don't live here. They ain't been here for years. That's what you said. I don't even know what a bird looks like." The boy reached over and picked a stone for throwing.

He stood up and let his eyes take in the whole picture before him. As far as the eye could see it was destruction — piles of bricks, partly-standing buildings, and the old freeway stretching towards the mountains. He picked out a half-broken window and threw the rock right through it. There was a crashing noise, and then silence again.

"Good shot, boy. Good shot." The old man went back to listening.

"Grandpa, tell me about the olden days." The ragged boy dropped down beside the grey-haired old one and begged him for a story. "Tell me about all this," and he pointed out at the awful picture that spread before them. "Tell me about the pretty houses, the clothes you wore, and the day it happened. Yeah, I like the part about the day best of all." The young boy sat at the feet of the dark-skinned old man. It was hot that day and sweat formed freely on his young face.

"There's too much to tell, boy. Besides, I don't remember so good any more." He closed his eyes.

"Please, Grandpa."

There was a minute of silence. Then he began slowly.

"On the day it happened, I bought a new car. Your Grandma and I had talked about getting a bigger car so we went downtown to get it. On the way back, the freeway was so crowded with other cars we could just barely inch along. We had the radio playing. I told you about a radio. Then a loud voice came on the program. He was wild and excited. He said that an unidentified flying object was sighted on the radar screen. That's as far as he got. I didn't know what to do. I couldn't stop with all those cars around us. It got black as night toward the ocean. A big cloud seemed to cover the sky. I jammed my foot on the brake and headed for the wall under an overpass. The quick stop made your Grandma hit her head and she dropped to the bottom of the seat. I fell over on top of her.

"For another second it was real quiet. I heard no noise of cars. There seemed to be no sound at all. Then there was a violent rocking feeling. It was like a tornado in Mississippi I lived through as a boy. It was like being in a spin-dryer at the Laundromat back in the old days. It kept rocking and rocking. Then there was the crashing, the yelling, and the screams. I got sick and dizzy, but I was too afraid to move.

"Finally, I lifted my head over the dashboard. I couldn't believe what I saw."

"What did you see?" As many times as the old man told the story, the boy always got excited at this part and he wanted to know every little detail. "What happened then, Grandpa?"

"It was all gone. Just like that, the fast, modern world I had known, was gone. The high buildings, the neat row of cars, the green plants and bushes, the houses along the sides of the freeway; they were gone in that short period of rocking. But the sound, the terrible, awful sound of falling things kept up. I looked around and saw the freeway rolling up and down like a roller coaster. I must be losing my mind, I thought. I tried to make Grandma look, but she was as still as could be."

"Go on, go on, Grandpa."

The old man seemed to be reliving the whole thing again.

"We stayed in the car and kept the motor and air conditioner running because all around us the plants and buildings were now on fire. Even with the air conditioning it was awful hot. I could hardly breathe, but the car kept going. Lucky for us."

He took a rag from his pocket and wiped at his head.

"I don't know how long we stayed in the car. Your Grandma started to move a little bit. Then she cried and cried as she was so worried about everybody at home.

"Was my Mama at home?" the boy asked.

"She was home alone with you. After it got dark your Grandma and I decided to get out of the car and try to walk home, somehow. We decided the enemy had gotten through our defenses and delivered the death blow, and death was now all around us."

The old man seemed tired suddenly. His face showed how painful it was to remember. "Boy, I can't tell you any more."

"Oh, Grandpa, just tell me about the clothes and the lights that turned on and off."

"We wore clothes that had lots of color. Would you believe it, your Mama had so many clothes she could wear something new each day for two weeks. Your poor Mama was such a pretty little girl." He stopped. When he started to talk again, his voice was soft and shaky. "We found her body covering yours when we got back home three days after the bomb fell. You were more dead than alive, but your Mama had saved your life by giving up hers."

Tears streamed down the old man's face.

"Grandpa, don't cry." The boy knew he had to say something more. Bravely he said, "I'll take care of you and Grandma. I will. I always will."

There was a long quiet time as the tall, young boy held his arm around the shoulder of the old man.

"Grandpa, what will happen to us?"

"I don't know, boy, but we've got each other. That's all we've got."

"Come on, let's go back home. Your Grandma will wonder where we are. Let's stop at that old grocery store and see if we can find some food in the piles of junk. Haven't had any good food since we stopped by there last week."

The old man and the boy turned their backs on the silent, concrete giant that twisted away towards the mountains. The sunlight caught what remained of the once shiny metal on the thousands of broken-down old cars on the freeway and made strange sparkles.

Suddenly there was the sound of a sweet song.

"Look up, boy. Look up! See it? There is a bird."

07697E

ED0 26425

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

SPECIALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS
FOR CLASSROOM TRIAL ONLY
ESEA NO. T – E – 129 – 67
1967

LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS
DIVISION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

UD 007 697. – 2

TEACHING

VOICES OF YOUTH *and* THREE NOVELETTES

An Instructional Bulletin *for* B7 ENGLISH

LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS
Division of Secondary Education
Beverly Boulevard Center
Specially-Funded Programs

DATE: July 7, 1967

CLASSROOM TRIAL APPROVAL

PROJECT: English-Writing

TITLE OF PUBLICATION: TEACHING VOICES OF YOUTH AND THREE NOVELETTES: An Instructional Bulletin for B7 English

The material is accepted and approved for classroom trial.

A. C. Brocki
Consultant in Charge

Harriette F. Williams
Project Coordinator

Helen L. Burge
Operating Supervisor

Operating Supervisor

Operating Supervisor

William Rosch
Instructional Services Supervisor

W. Settle
SFP Administrative Coordinator

ESEA - T - E - 129 - 67

CONTENTS

Page
Foreword iii
Acknowledgments v

Introduction 1
Teaching Literature to Urban Pupils 3
Ways of Teaching Disussion to Urban Pupils 6
Structure of Lesson Plans 9

LESSON PLANS FOR VOICES OF YOUTH 12

New People, New Places

The Shoes With a Thousand Eyes 12
It All Depends on the Hairdo 13
The Two-Party Dress 14
Nobody's Gonna Talk 'Bout Me! 14
Out of Gas 15
Love, Dolores 16
I'm Just Me 17
Shy Boy 18
Backstage 18
Girl Crazy 19
Just a Few Laughs 20
Henry Lee and the Photograph 21

Understanding a Larger World

The Beach 22
Rainy Night 22
I Have to Have Music 23
The Geraniums 24
I Don't Care What You Want! 25
At Peace With the World 26
Tigerman 27
Eleven Haiku 28
Sam, the Saddest Sitter on Summer Street 29
The Fight 30
Gum 31
Gloria 32
Poem 33
Dear Marilyn 33

Page

Animals

Snow Country 35
Four Animal Heroes 36

Adventure

Pete Washington 37
The Wish 39
Spring, Trains, Beer 40
The Race 41
I'll Tell You Why 43
Monsters and Mummies at Midnight 43
Unhaunted House 44
The Car Thief 45
Crazy Eddie 46
The Mystery of the Golden Locket 46
Legendary Americans 47
Robert Smalls and the Amazing Escape 50
Night Adventure 51
The Day 51

LESSON PLANS FOR NOVELETTEES 53

Danger Above and Below 53
Runaway Jerk 54
Tramp Dog 55

FOREWORD

This instructional bulletin has been prepared as a resource for use with average and below-average B7 English classes in the teaching of literary selections developed by Specially-Funded Programs funded through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

These literary selections were designed for high interest and appropriate reading ease to meet the reading needs of many urban pupils. However, some selections may appeal to some pupils more than to other pupils, since the ranges of ability and interest of these pupils are broad. To accommodate this consideration, the reading ease and appeal of selections are varied correspondingly. The teacher, as the person acquainted most closely with the characteristics of a particular class, will be best qualified to choose selections for implementing Junior High School English: A Course of Study. Although the selections encompass a wide range in reading ease and interest, all of them have been taught sucessfully in representative B7 English classes and have been evaluated by teachers and by a majority of pupils as being readily readable, readily understandable, and highly interesting.

Ideally, through these literary selections, teachers will be better able to explore with young people some of the values basic to the ennoblement and ultimately, perhaps, to the survival of man: integrity, courage, responsibility, justice, reverence, love, and respect for law and order.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Appreciation is extended to the many persons who participated in the development of this instructional bulletin:

The English Advisory Committee made helpful suggestions from the teacher's point of view. Members were:

Rita Chavez, Jordan High School
Gertrude Dorsey, Roosevelt High School
Frank Hernandez, Irving Junior High School
Manila Lee, Harte Junior High School
Anne Nichols, Belmont High School

The following supervisors aided in the development of the program for providing a new literature for urban pupils, participated in the selection of manuscripts, and helped to plan the contents of this bulletin.

William Rosch, Supervisor of Secondary English
  Division of Instructional Planning and Services
Helen Burge, Supervisor of English/Social Studies
  Division of Secondary Education
Donald Perryman, Supervisor of English/Social Studies
  Division of Secondary Education

Appreciation is expressed to the following teachers, each of whom used and, in many instances, commented on a number of the lesson plans:

Nancy Detjen, Berendo Junior High School
Eileen McDowell, Berendo Junior High School
Gene Satlin, Berendo Junior High School
Wilma Schmalzried, Berendo Junior High School
Maryellen Bowens, Drew Junior High School
Del Davis, Drew Junior High School
Stanton Lee Presnall, Gage Junior High School
Donald Olson, Markham Junior High School
Mildred Vaughn, Markham Junior High School
Jude Nichols, Virgil Junior High School
Ruby Nix, Virgil Junior High School
Joan D. Peck, Virgil Junior High School

Al Lalane, Editor for Specially-Funded Programs, made valuable editorial suggestions.

Special appreciation is due to A. C. BROCKI, Consultant, Specially-Funded Programs, for writing the introductory pages and preparing the manuscript in its present form. Appreciation is also due to JACQUELIN LUDLUM, Consultant, Specially-Funded Programs, for preparing the lesson plans in their trial form.

INTRODUCTION

What This Instructional Bulletin Contains

This publication presents 1) ways to use Voices of Youth and the three novelettes in conjunction with Junior High School English: A Course of Study; 2) suggestions for teaching literature to urban pupils; 3) suggestions for teaching urban pupils to discuss effectively; 4) an outline of the organization of lesson plans; and 5) lesson plans for each selection in Voices of Youth and each of the novelettes.

Relation to "Junior High School English: A Course of Study"

Voices of Youth and the three novelettes were developed primarily to give pupils in average and below-average B7 English classes and their teachers literary materials for use in working toward the following objectives, as listed in Junior High School English: A Course of Study:

Composition	Speak and write in order to convey information, opinion, and emotion clearly, logically, and forcefully, using standard English appropriate to the situation.
Reading	Read with comprehension increasingly complex and mature materials.
Literature	Respond sensitively to literature leading to an extending, intensifying, and focusing

	of experience; to an increased commitment to the human values; and to enjoyment of reading and an aesthetic enrichment of one's life.
Listening	Listen receptively, responsively, and critically for information and appreciation.
Thinking	Think clearly and logically, make decisions, and support generalizations and opinions with evidence.
Grammar	Understand the structure of language and use it to improve speech and writing.
Semantics	Respond sensitively to the powerful way language reflects attitudes, emotions, and purposes.

Pupils can be led to achieve these objectives by improving in the skills listed in Junior High School English: A Course of Study. The main divisions of Voices of Youth correspond to the units of B7 English:

	Unit Titles of B7 English	Corresponding Divisions of "Voices of Youth"
Unit I:	Orientation	New People, New Places
Unit II:	Understanding a Larger World	Understanding a Larger World
Unit III:	Animals	Animals
Unit IV:	Adventure	Adventure

The three novelettes can fit appropriately into the above units. Runaway Jerk can fit into Units I, II, or IV; Danger Above and Below into Unit IV; and Tramp Dog into Unit III.

TEACHING LITERATURE TO URBAN PUPILS

To meet closely the needs of beginning pupils in junior high school, the selections for Voices of Youth and the three novelettes were chosen initially according to their overall adherence to the following characteristics:

1. content that is meaningful to thirteen-year-olds
2. major characters of appropriate age for adolescent identification
3. written from the point of view of young persons
4. appropriate reading ease to prevent frustration and to to promote reading growth--from third- to fifth-grade reading ease
5. appropriate length--from 1,000 to 2,000 words for short stories and articles, and from 4,000 to 6,000 words for novelettes

When the above characteristics are considered, it is evident these literary materials may contain built-in features that recommend their use with many urban pupils who are considered reluctant readers. Even with these possible advantages, however, a skillful teacher still is instrumental in bringing the printed words "to life." Teachers unfamiliar with special problems in teaching literature to urban pupils who are reluctant readers should review the following suggestions made by teachers experienced in teaching literature to reluctant readers:

1. Select a story of appropriate ease and appropriate content for your class, particularly at the beginning of the semester. For example, "Backstage" has broad appeal as far as content goes; however, its somewhat advanced vocabulary may discourage some pupils in very slow classes. Similarly, "It All Depends on the Hairdo" will appeal to girls; however, it may not appeal readily to classes composed largely of boys.

2. Have specific but limited objectives in mind for a literary selection. "Rainy Night," for example, contains all the elements of storytelling. One might be tempted to present too many of these elements in too detailed a manner, thus disconcerting average and below-average pupils. It may be wise in teaching "Rainy Night" to concentrate on the value conflicts in the story or on what major ideas the author is presenting through Steve's and Mrs. Merrywood's experience. If you do want to discuss setting, style, mood, or other literary aspects, be sure to relate them to the value conflicts or ideas of the story rather than stress them as terms of literary criticism.

3. Have the sequence of the steps of your teaching plan firmly in mind. In other words, know in what sequence you will present vocabulary items, motivate for reading, discuss a limited number of aspects of the selection, relate to other aspects of English, have the pupils read the selection, and present related activities.

4. Select vocabulary items that are necessary for the pupil's understanding of the selection and decide on the most efficient means of teaching the vocabulary items to the pupils. It may be advisable to present a minimum number of new words so that the vocabulary part of the lesson doesn't become an end in itself, and thus overshadow the reading.

5. Always motivate pupils to read a selection. Motivation can be supplied in a number of ways: relate the content of previously read selections to the content of the one at hand; present a hypothetical or real situation similar to that in the selection; relate the experiences of the characters in the selection to the similar experiences of the pupils; present the content of the selection in question form; or read to the class the opening of the selection, to the point where the problem is established fully.

6. Decide beforehand the best way for pupils to read the selection. For example, many short stories and articles can best be read silently; however, other selections, such as poems and plays, lend themselves to individual oral reading or dramatic reading. It is wise to avoid routine, rotational oral reading.

7. Always discuss what the pupils have read in common. Merely asking whether the pupils like or dislike a selection does not constitute an educational discussion. Two important purposes of an educational discussion are to determine to what extent the pupils have understood what they have read and to lead them to greater understanding of what they have read. For further information on this topic, see the following section on ways of teaching urban pupils to discuss effectively.

8. Plan appropriate follow-up activities for selections read in common. Some selection or teaching plans lend themselves to writing assignments, while others may lead naturally into small-group discussions, panel discussions, individual reports, dramatic reading, or exploration of related aspects of language. As a minimal purpose, the selection may serve as an introduction, by either contrast or similarity, to selections that will follow.

WAYS OF TEACHING DISCUSSION TO URBAN PUPILS*

Many teachers have experienced difficulty in helping urban pupils to discuss effectively. Some pupils are reluctant to speak; others quickly create disorder in discussion periods. Teachers inexperienced in leading discussions among urban pupils may find the following observations made by teachers experienced in these activities helpful.

1. Develop with the pupils workable standards for discussion. Since many urban pupils have not readily entered into classroom discussion, they usually lack practice in carrying on a profitable discussion. The standards created should not be so rigid as to discourage response. For minimal standards, the following guidelines for pupils might be emphasized and explored:
    - one pupil speaks at a time
    - stick to the subject
    - listen carefully to all speakers
    - raise hand to speak
    - speak clearly
    - practice form in speaking
    - practice using appropriate language
    - direct your words to the whole class, not just to a fellow pupil opposing your point of view
    - learn to disagree reasonably and courteously
    - support what you have to say with evidence

---

* Many of the suggestions presented in this section are taken from Johnson, Kenneth R., Teaching Culturally Disadvantaged Pupils, Science Research Associates, Inc., 1966.

Some classes may have to master the first three guidelines before going on to the remaining ones. The established guidelines should be reviewed before each discussion because many pupils have to be taught actively to discuss. In teaching pupils to stick to the subject, to practice form, and to disagree reasonably and courtesously, you may have to present them with the traditional phrases to use, such as, "In addition to what Martha said .....," "I don't agree with....," "I'd like to add.....," or "In contrast to...." Stop a discussion immediately if pupils get out of hand and examine the guidelines to show them why the discussion had to be stopped. Always go over guidelines at the close of a discussion to evaluate how skillfully the class discussed.

2. Channel all discussion through the teacher, especially at the beginning of the semester. Some urban pupils may become aggressive in supporting their point of view and may fall back on a combative cultural pattern to answer a pupil holding an opposing point of view.

3. Plan an agenda for discussion, with specific, limited objectives and specific questions. To stimulate a maximal discussion, phrase questions so that they cannot be answered by "yes" or "no."

4. Relate material being discussed to the lives of pupils, since pupils with limited cultural experience frequently have difficulty understanding persons whose ways of life are unfamiliar. For example, in teaching "I Have to Have Music," if the pupils do not understand the cafe owner's point of view when he stops the jukebox, the teacher might bridge to the experiences of young people with the following questions:

   - On what occasions have you seen teachers do what the cafe owner did?

   - Why might a teacher stop pupils from dancing in the cafeteria?

   - In what ways was the cafe owner right in stopping the music?

   - In what ways was he wrong?

- On what occasions have you had to stop someone younger than you are, who was doing something wrong?

- How do you think the younger person felt?

5. Occasionally rephrase pupils' statements, if they are not well stated or if the class could not hear them. However, if statements are continually rephrased, the pupils may become dependent and may not try their hardest. Also, praise a pupil honestly whenever he states something well or shows insight. In fact, to a certain extent, "Rephrase and Praise" might be a productive motto for teachers leading discussions.

6. Emphasize discussion, not correction of dialect or accent. Rigid insistence on the use of standard English speech patterns may inhibit the flow of discussion.

7. Accept, within reason, an unfamiliar point of view. Pupils may interpret a situation from the point of view of a different culture. The teacher's object should be to acquaint pupils with the values of the larger society, rather than to supplant a pupil's values. Moreover, most pupils quickly learn to give answers that they believe the teacher expects. Pupils may have to become aware of their own values before they can relate their values to universal concepts.

STRUCTURE OF LESSON PLANS

The following lesson plans for Voices of Youth are subdivided into four basic parts: 1) vocabulary items, when applicable; 2) the number of paragraphs to be read at the opening of the story, for motivating and determining the pupils' ability to read independently; 3) questions for determining the pupils' ability to read independently; and 4) discussion questions to be asked when the pupils have completed their reading.

Vocabulary Items

The number of vocabulary items presented varies with the reading ease of the selections. With some very easy selections, no vocabulary items have been listed; with more difficult selections, several items are listed. The number of words that a teacher will present to a class will vary. For some classes, many of the selected words may be new; other classes may be familiar with all of them, and would, therefore, not profit from review. It is possible that a teacher with a very slow class will choose to create a list, although no vocabulary items have been offered. A teacher of an average class may decided to select only a few words from the proffered list.

Each teacher will determine an appropriate method of presenting the words to the class. A major consideration, however, is

/

that a teacher should not utilize a method that causes the students to lose interest in the literary selection. Some ways of presenting vocabulary items follow:

- Write the words on the chalkboard, duplicate them, or type them on a transparency, and ask for meanings informally.
- Select pupils to look up a word and report on it to the class.
- Write the list of words and an unmatched list of meanings; then direct the students to match the words with their meanings.

Introductory Reading for Motivation

Since many average and below-average pupils are reluctant readers, teachers may find it necessary to motivate pupils on every undertaking in reading. Some ways of motivating reading have been briefly mentioned already under the heading TEACHING LITERATURE TO URBAN PUPILS. Since different selections require different approaches, teachers would not introduce all of the selections in exactly the same way. One way frequently used, however, is to read aloud to the pupils from the beginning of a selection to the point where the problem is fully formed. Following this, to direct the pupils' further reading and to determine the degree to which they have understood what has been read, the teacher usually asks a few pertinent questions, to be answered orally. The number of paragraphs to be read and some appraisal questions to be asked have been provided for almost all of the selections in the anthology. Poems, interviews, plays, and some nonfiction usually require other teaching techniques, which have been recommended, where applicable.

Discussion Questions

Every selection in the anthology and each novelette has been provided with cumulative discussion questions which lead toward an understanding of a major feature of the selection involved. Individual teachers may consider another feature of a selection more important; consequently, it is expected that they will provide their own discussion topics. In most cases, the provided questions emphasize what the author has to say about people and life, rather than academic considerations about style or aesthetic form. Also, they are intended for use in oral discussion, after the pupils have completed their reading of the selection, not as a study guide. However, in addition to these uses, many of the questions may be adapted usefully for various follow-up activities, such as writing assignments, small-group discussions, and panel or individual reports.

LESSON PLANS FOR VOICES OF YOUTH

(New People, New Places)

THE SHOES WITH A THOUSAND EYES

Vocabulary:

weird
foxie
emergency
clumping
square
steamroller
mercy
loudmouth
blacktop
thousand
permission
request

Motivational reading:

Since this selection is in play form, it lends itself readily to dramatic reading. You may want several pupils to prepare their lines a day in advance. To arouse interest, you may want to have signs prepared which designate the role taken by each reader. The sign may be pinned on the pupil or hung around his neck. Those pupils not reading in front of the class can follow the reading silently in their own copies.

If you are going to have the pupils read the selection silently, you may want to read the first seven paragraphs aloud to the class.

Appraisal questions:

1. What kind of a person is the main character?
2. Who are some of the other characters in the play?
3. What seems to be Jim's problem?

Discussion questions:

1. What makes the title of the play a good one?
2. What are some of the problems Jim has because of his mouth?
3. Why does Jim let his mouth, rather than his brain, control him?

4. Why does Jim really say unkind things to Mary?

5. Why does Mary finally smile at Jim?

6. Through what happens in the play, what is the author telling us about human beings?

IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE HAIRDO

Vocabulary:

hairdo	mood	sheath	ponytail
experimenting	stupid	squeezes	droopy

Motivational reading: the first eight paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. Who is telling the story?

2. What is her problem?

3. What kind of person is she when her hair is in an up-do?

Discussion questions:

1. Why did Larry get angry when the girl wore her up-do hair style?

2. How does the girl act when she wears a ponytail? Why do you think she acts this way?

3. How does she act when she wears her down-do?

4. Which hairdo do you think Larry likes best? Why?

5. (For boys): Which hairdo mood do you like in a girl? Why?

   (For girls): Which hairdo mood do you think is most like you? Why?

6. Through this story, what is the author telling us about human beings?

THE TWO-PARTY DRESS

Vocabulary:

tongue
prom
sash
clapped

Motivational reading: the first ten paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What kind of person is Lee Ann?
2. What does "Lee Ann's tongue was as sharp as a knife" mean?
3. What is Tina's problem in ths story?

Discussion questions:

1. What is Janelle's problem?
2. In what ways has Lee Ann been mean to both Tina and Janelle?
3. Why do you think Lee Ann is being mean to Tina and Janelle?
4. What plan does Bill suggest so that both girls can go to the prom?
5. Why is "The Two-Party Dress" a good title for this story?
6. What is the author telling us in this story?

NOBODY'S GONNA TALK 'BOUT ME!

Vocabulary:

knot
anger
chums
icky
tension
flunkies
liar
scratches
enemy
secretary
rumors
stupid
goofed

Motivational reading: the first ten paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. Why is Toni going to fight Delia?
2. In the opening of the story, what effect do Toni's friends have on her?
3. In what ways is Toni acting unreasonably?

Discussion questions:

1. Why wasn't Miss Finch able to stop the fight?
2. Why did all the girls who saw the fight have their names taken down? Was this fair? Explain your answer.
3. Why do young people get angry when others talk about them?
4. Why is fighting dangerous?
5. Who was actually responsible for starting the fight?
6. What did Toni and Delia learn from what happened in the story?

OUT OF GAS

Vocabulary:

hood application diploma credits
ignition busboy

Motivational reading: the first five paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. In the first five paragraphs, how does the author show that Lennie knows a lot about cars?

2. Why does Lennie stop to help Mr. Barlow?

3. What kind of person does Lennie seem to be?

Discussion questions:

1. Why didn't Lennie like school?

2. Why couldn't Lennie get the job he wanted?

3. Why doesn't Lennie like the work he is doing?

4. How did Mr. Barlow try to help Lennie?

5. What are two possible meanings of the title "Out of Gas"?

LOVE, DOLORES

Vocabulary:

detention auditorium settle

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. Why is Richard angry?

2. How did Richard find out about the note?

3. What do you think will happen in the story?

Discussion questions:

1. Why was Dolores right or wrong for dropping Richard?

2. Why did Richard deserve the detention he got?

3. Why did Dolores enjoy the fight between Richard and Johnny?

4. Why did Richard help Johnny after the fight?

5. From what happened in ths story, what did Richard learn?

I'M JUST ME

Vocabulary:

closet
foster
ofay
headshrinker
psychiatrist
kleptomania
impressive
disturbed
shy
theft

Motivational reading: the first seven paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What do the words "lifting stuff" mean?
2. How does Arnie feel toward the policemen as the story begins?
3. In the opening paragraphs, what tells you that Arnie is brave?

Discussion questions:

1. Why have the police come to get Arnie?
2. Why is Arnie in a foster home?
3. What is so unusual about the things Arnie has taken?
4. According to Miss Schultz, what might be the reason Arnie does the things he does?
5. In what ways do you agree with her idea? How do you disagree?
6. What does the title of the story "I'm Just Me" mean?
7. Do you think Arnie will change and grow up into a good citizen because of Mr. and Mrs. Young? Explain your answer.
8. What is the author trying to tell us in this story?

SHY BOY

Vocabulary:

shy
jukebox
twisting
swaying
giggled
blush
trembling
pounded

Motivational reading: the entire poem

Discussion questions:

1. What kind of music is being played at the dance?
2. What words does the author use to describe the music?
3. What are some of the things the author says to show how unsure the boy is at the dance?
4. What events show that the boy is unsure of himself at the dance?
5. How can you tell that the girls at the dance are also unsure of themselves?
6. What do the last three lines of the poem tell you about the boy?
7. What is the author of this poem telling us about young people?

BACKSTAGE

Vocabulary:

stage
scene
style
actor
prompt
character
actress
rehearsal
audience
makeup
sniffling
dramatic
sensational
selfishness
curtain
squeak
rig
fink
cue
prop
costume

Motivational reading: the first four paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What is the problem as the story begins?
2. What are Katherine's reasons for not wanting to go on?
3. What kind of person does Katherine seem to be?

Discussion questions:

1. Why was Mr. Harper right in giving Katherine's part to Alice?
2. How does Mr. Harper help Alice when she is on stage?
3. What do these things tell you about Mr. Harper?
4. Why shouldn't Katherine have her part back?
5. What does Katherine's final exit tell you about her?
6. Through the events of this story, what is the author telling us about some people?

GIRL CRAZY

Vocabulary:

dude
aisle
teased
continental
flip
jealous
mature

Motivational reading: the first six paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What seems to be the problem in the story?
2. How does T. C. show his interest in Rochelle?
3. From what has been read, what do you think might happen in the story?

Discussion questions:

1. How does T. C. usually act with girls, as the story begins?
2. How did Rochelle react to T. C.'s attentions?
3. How did T. C. feel when Rochelle acted differently toward him?
4. According to T. C.'s sister, in what ways do older boys act differently?
5. By the end of the story, in what ways has T. C. improved?

JUST A FEW LAUGHS

Vocabulary:

comedy
nag
graduation
detention
swats
slob
suspension
"Bronx cheer"

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What clues tell you where the story takes place and who the major character is?
2. How do you know this is going to be a funny story?
3. What do you think will happen to the main character by the end of the story?

Discussion questions:

1. In what way was Joe justified in laughing at Miss Small? In what way was he wrong?
2. Why do you think Joe was unable to keep from getting into trouble?
3. In what ways do you disagree with Joe when he claims he is not mean?

4. Why is it likely that Joe won't be able to solve his problems after he gets out of school?

HENRY LEE AND THE PHOTOGRAPH

Vocabulary:

kinfolk photograph picture errands
camera

Motivational reading: the first five paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What kind of boy is Henry Lee? Where do you think he has come from?
2. How old is he? How can you tell?
3. What thing does Henry Lee particularly notice in Jerry's room?

Discussion questions:

1. Why could someone want his photograph as much as Henry Lee did?
2. What are some new situations Henry Lee meets in Jerry's home and in school?
3. What does Henry Lee do to show how much he wants his photograph?
4. What great disappointment comes to Henry Lee?
5. Why does he think this has happened to him?
6. Most of us would not be so concerned over a photograph, but why might Henry Lee have been so concerned?

(Understanding a Larger World)

THE BEACH

Vocabulary:

beach
bounced
oozy
treat
supermarket
ocean
surfing
towel
counselor
huddled
splashed

Motivational reading: the first five paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. Why did Mark wish he had a better towel?
2. Why did Mark say he had been to the ocean before, when he really hadn't?
3. What might be Mark's problem in the story?

Discussion questions:

1. The author chose the beach for the setting. What other setting could she have chosen?
2. What did the boys do that showed how uncertain of themselves they were about being at the beach for the first time?
3. Why did Mark feel important when he helped the girl in the water?
4. What are some of the important things the author is telling us about people in this story?
5. (optional) What does the beach stand for?

RAINY NIGHT

Vocabulary:

liquor store
stretcher
windshield wipers
raincoat
police
decent
credit
dead
foreign intrigue
ambulance
nurse
wallet
ashy
wino

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What words in the first three paragraphs make you realize that the story is not going to be a humorous one?
2. What facts show that Steve is poor?
3. Why might Steve be afraid when he sees the man lying in front of the house?

Discussion questions:

1. Why did Steve's mother want to move the man into the house?
2. Why were Steve and Junior against moving the man?
3. What dangers did Mrs. Merrywood face in moving the man?
4. Why did the sick man offer money to Mrs. Merrywood?
5. Why did Mrs. Merrywood refuse the gift?
6. Was Mrs. Merrywood right or wrong in moving the man? Why?

I HAVE TO HAVE MUSIC

Vocabulary:

recording
portable
guitar
commercial
old-fashioned
corny
taco
jukebox
courage
rage
rainbow
squinting

Motivational reading: the first four paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What reasons does the mother give for wanting the radio off?

2. What does Marie mean when she asks, "Why are grown-ups like that?"

3. Is Marie right or is the mother right?

Discussion questions:

1. What does Marie say that shows she understands some of her mother's problems?

2. What effects does music have on Marie?

3. What does Marie mean when she speaks of Alex's loneliness, anger, broken hopes, and laughed-at-dreams?

4. What good reasons might the owner of the shop have for turning off the jukebox?

5. What does "I feel as if he has unplugged the rainbow" mean?

6. Without music, what kind of person would Marie be?

THE GERANIUMS

Vocabulary:

geraniums
conversation
static
fridge
pajamas
cereal
oatmeal
wages
stunted
frilly
tantrum
sniffling
conference
counselor
treat

Reading activity:

Since this selection is in play form, this may be an opportunity to have several pupils give a dramatic reading. You may want four pupils to prepare their lines a day in advance. An additional pupil could be responsible for arranging chairs or desks for the scenes and for narrating. The remaining pupils could follow by reading silently in their own copies.

Discussion questions:

During or after the reading of the play, you may want to discuss some of its aspects through questions such as the following:

1. Why is the play called "The Geraniums"? In what important ways are the geraniums like the children?
2. How does each person in the play feel about the others in the play?
3. How does Mrs. Edmonds show that she is a good mother to each of her children?
4. Why would you say Stan is the man of the family?
5. Why is Elaine so unhappy about wearing the dress her mother wants her to wear?
6. Why do Stevie and Elaine fight so much?
7. At the end of the play, Mrs. Edmonds tells Ruth that "It's worth it." What does she mean by these words?

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU WANT

Vocabulary:

arrangement
substitute
stapled
stapler
counselor
lecture
difference
blouse

Motivational reading: the first thirteen paragraphs, to the point where Linda realizes it's going to be a bad day

Appraisal questions:

1. What caused Linda and Carol to fight?
2. How does Linda feel about her sister?
3. Why does Linda feel it's going to be a bad day?

Discussion questions:

1. After her fight with Carol, what other conflicts did Linda have?
2. How did these conflicts make her feel?
3. In what way was Mrs. Morrison different from other adults in the story?
4. What did Linda feel she needed most?
5. In what ways did this story give a true picture of teen-agers today?

AT PEACE WITH THE WORLD

Vocabulary:

trembling
fists
walloped
showdown
apology
flailing
wrestled
bawling
mimicked
snarling
suspension
detention
confident

Motivational reading: the first six paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What kind of person was Ken?
2. What effect did the crowd have on Greg and Ken?
3. Why did Greg want someone to stop the fight before it began?

Discussion questions:

1. What caused the fight between Greg and Ken?
2. Why didn't Greg justify himself to Mr. Walker?
3. What does Greg mean by "playing the game by the rules"?

4. What change took place in Ken while he was in the office?

5. By the end of the story, what had Greg learned?

TIGERMAN

Vocabulary:

prowl
blushed
ebony
perfume
rhythm
bait
collision
strutted
tigress
stripes

Motivational reading: to the point where Danny realizes that someday he will have to live up to the name "Tigerman"

Appraisal questions:

1. How do the girls in the opening of the story feel about Danny?

2. Why was Danny given the name "Tigerman"?

3. What seems to be Danny's problem in the story?

Discussion questions:

1. How does Danny feel about the attention he gets?

2. Why is he right for letting them think he is dangerous?

3. What does Tigerman mean when he says, "Tiger, this is it. Your stripes are showing...all chicken yellow"?

4. At the end of the story, what is your opinion of Tigerman? Is he still a Tiger? Is Charlotte really a Tigress?

5. Through what happens in the story, what is the author telling us about people?

ELEVEN HAIKU

Introduction:

Since many pupils may be unfamiliar with poetic form, it may be wise to introduce them briefly to the poetic form of haiku. To do so, you may want to discuss some of the following ideas:

> One of the reasons football is enjoyable for both the people in the stands and the players on the field is that a football game has rules which the players must follow and which the viewers must understand. What would happen if we put 22 men on a field with a football but with no goals, no lines, and no rules? There would be no game. There would be only confusion. We can't have a game without limits or rules.
>
> Similarly, we can't have a painting without a surface to paint on. The size of the paper or canvas is another limitation or rule. The size we choose determines how big the things can be when we draw them. (This can be shown by drawing two frames for pictures on the chalkboard, one large and one small.) Also, we have to follow rules for making the figures of our paintings. Ordinarily, a person should not be larger than the house he is standing next to. Ordinarily, a person should have two eyes, not three or five. These are only a few rules for painting.
>
> Songwriters have to follow rules, too. What would happen if we sang the words of one song to the music of another song? We would have to make changes to make them fit.
>
> A poet, too, follows rules when he writes poetry. He follows rules of language and rules of form. In the kind of poetry we are going to read, the poet limits himself to a very few words to describe a feeling or a scene. Part of the fun of reading what he writes is knowing the rules he follows.

Read to the class the explanation of haiku before going to the poems. Then, read the first haiku aloud to the pupils. You may want to examine some of its meanings through questions such as the following:

Discussion questions:

1. Who might be speaking?

2. What does he see?

3. What does the scene remind him of?

4. Here are some of the ideas of the poem, but not written in haiku form: "My emotions burst forth like a sudden flight of birds when I am close to you."
   Why is the poem itself more fun to read?

You may want to break up the poem into units of sound so that the pupils can see the rules of the form.

Quail/ ex/plode/ up/ from 5
The/ field./ So/ flies/ my/ quick/ heart 7
When/ I/ touch/ your/ hand. 5

Of course, you will want to examine the rest of the poems primarily for content. You may want to start by giving a paraphrase or a prose approximation of the content of a few of the poems before calling on the pupils to explain the rest or to write their own haiku. Two examples of prose approximation follow.

Poem 2: A warm breeze reminds me painfully of a sweetheart who left me.

Poem 3: In the fall, nature seems to die. Will the next season make life and desire return again?

SAM, THE SADDEST SITTER ON SUMMER STREET

Vocabulary:

brat
gong
records
squawking
routine
complicated
pajamas
elbow
spit
rattle

Motivational reading: the first eight paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What kind of girl is Sam?

2. What seems to be Sam's problem in the story?

3. Why doesn't Sam want to be a baby-sitter?

Discussion questions:

1. Why is Sam left to baby-sit with little Belle?

2. In what ways did Sam's sister lie to her about the baby?

3. What were some of the problems Sam faced as she took care of the baby?

4. Point out some sentences in the story where the author uses TV to describe an action of little Belle. How did this make it easier for you to understand the story?

5. What is funny about the line "I collected my victim"?

6. In what ways is this a realistic story about teenage baby-sitters?

THE FIGHT

Vocabulary:

wart
doom
bully
bluff
shuffle
nickname
coward
commando
sissy
swats
judo

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. How did the fight start?

2. Why didn't Ken want to fight?

3. Why did Mary Hale encourage Ken to do something about it?

Discussion questions:

1. Why did Ken wish Mary would mind her own business?
2. Why didn't Ken tell Mr. Grissom about the stolen lunch?
3. Why did the vice-principal have to discipline the boys?
4. In what way or ways did each boy show he was afraid of the other?
5. What does the writer mean when he says, "Spit was Wartnose's messenger of doom"?
6. In what ways is the writer telling us that everyone at some time is unsure of himself?

GUM

Vocabulary:

forbidden pleasure stubborn grind
soul

Motivational reading:

You may want to read the poem aloud to the pupils while they follow silently in their own copies.

Discussion questions:

1. What details does the writer give so we can picture a pack of gum in our minds?
2. How can gum give the soul pleasure?
3. How can chewing gum get rid of math and grammar problems, stubborn basketballs, and teachers with angry voices?
4. How can life taste sweet?

GLORIA

Vocabulary:

flip-flop
frayed
drainboard
stomach
knots
tablecloth
wiggle
tickle
giggled
squirm
oysters
fuzzy
clinic
unbuckle
foster
funeral

Motivational reading:

Since the problem in the story is implied rather than stated and since the opening of the story is charged with emotion, it may be necessary to read only the first three paragraphs to stimulate the pupils to go on reading.

Appraisal questions:

1. What must have happened before the story opened?

2. Why is Gloria being beaten?

Discussion questions:

1. What did Gloria mean by "And no chance ever to understand each other"?

2. Why is Gloria afraid when she first goes to live with the Day family?

3. In what ways is Mr. Day different from Gloria's father?

4. How does Mr. Day finally show that he is not like her father?

5. Because of her experiences, what kind of person will Gloria probably be when she becomes an adult?

POEM

Motivational reading:

You may want to read the poem aloud to the pupils while they follow silently in their own copies.

Discussion questions:

1. Who is speaking in the poem?
2. In the first five lines of the poem, the writer uses fifteen words to describe something that took place in his childhood. What took place? How many words did you use to describe what took place? What might this difference tell us about peotry?
3. Why do young children of different race or countries of origin usually have no difficulties in playing together?
4. What does the writer say in the second five lines?
5. What is the problem in the poem?
6. What is the writer's solution to the problem?
7. Why do you agree or disagree with his solution?

DEAR MARILYN

Vocabulary:

roller coaster
rehearsal
pretended
diagram
swollen
monster
blushed
wobbly
crooked
sweaty
giggle
phony
darling
essay
keen

Motivational reading: the first note

Appraisal questions:

1. Where does the story take place?

2. What will the other notes be about?

Discussion questions:

1. How does this story differ from other stories you have read?

2. Why did Jeff pretend to fix his shoe?

3. Why do girls talk to each other about a boy like Jeff?

4. What did Janice mean when she said that love is so strange?

5. What did Janice mean when she said that parents just don't understand?

6. Why does Jan sign her notes differently?

7. In what ways does this story present either a true or an untrue picture of teen-agers today?

(Animals)

SNOW COUNTRY

Vocabulary:

husky
clues
whimper
beaver
factor
possum
thumped
precaution
Constable

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What words in the first two paragraphs tell you where the story takes place?

2. What is Peter's problem in the story?

Discussion questions:

Since this is a story in which action is emphasized, you may not want to attempt holding a thought-provoking discussion on the content. Nevertheless, after the pupils have read the story, you may want to measure their understanding by discussing some aspects of the story through questions such as the following:

1. Who knows who the fur thief is?

2. What plan do Peter and Constable work out to catch the thief?

3. Why doesn't Peter mind carrying out a plan that might take weeks?

4. How does Peter show his deep love for his dog?

5. What methods does the author use in this story to hold our interest?

FOUR ANIMAL HEROES

A Dolphin Led Ships To Safety

Vocabulary:

dolphin	schooner	guide	reef
sharks	current	propeller	herding
	pilot	tourists	

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Discussion questions:

1. In what part of the world did Pelorus Jack lead ships safely to port?
2. Why was it unusual having Pelorus Jack lead a ship?
3. Describe what Pelorus Jack looked like.
4. Why wouldn't Pelorus Jack guide the Penguin?
5. In what ways did Pelorus Jack act as a man might act?
6. What finally happened to Pelorus Jack?

A Horse, The Lone Survivor of a Battle

Vocabulary:

survivor	cavalry	ambush	tomahawks
clumsy	ancestors	ravine	trumpet
courage	endurance	massacre	

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Discussion questions:

1. Where and when does this story take place?
2. Describe Comanche's faults and virtues (bad points and good points).

3. What made Comanche famous?

4. What things did Comanche do in his later life that seem very unusual for a horse?

5. How was Comanche used as a symbol or a reminder of a great battle? What other symbols (things that stand for something else) can you describe?

A Dog Helper at the South Pole

Vocabulary:

husky
hitched
crevasse
polished
quarters
hitched
rugged
custom
polished
intelligence
sled
paw

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Discussion questions:

1. What in Chinook's background helped him to be a great sled dog?

2. In what ways did Chinook show courage?

3. Why did Chinook have to be replaced as lead dog?

4. What finally happened to Chinook?

A Runt Saved a Town

Vocabulary:

runt
pet
kennels
breed
mushing
hero
diphtheria
serum
thermometer
excitement
endurance

Motivational reading: the first four paragraphs

Discussion questions:

1. When Togo was young, why did his owner give him away as a pet?

2. How did Togo prove that he had a mind of his own, even when he was young?
3. In what ways did Togo show that he was a great leader?
4. What was the greatest test of Togo's strength and endurance?
5. How did Togo's last days differ from those of Chinook's?

(Comparative Questions)

1. In what ways were all of these animals alike?
2. In what ways were these animals much like men?
3. What lessons can we learn from these four stories?

(Adventure)

PETE WASHINGTON

Vocabulary:

clumsy
landlord
exercises
cash register
scream

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What was Pete's problem?
2. What might happen to Pete in this story?

Discussion questions:

1. Why did Pete's mother want him to get a job?
2. In what ways does Pete misinterpret Mr. Clark's words and looks?
3. What happened at Pete's job that changed his way of thinking about himself?
4. How does Pete feel about himself and his future after the attempted robbery?
5. What other problems similar to Pete's could a young person have?

THE WISH

Vocabulary:

chocolate
padlock
soda
pickle
garage
alley
refrigerator
ketchup
radio
raspberry
trumpet
pest
stretched
disgust

Motivational reading: the first five paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. In what ways does Cynthia bother Mike?
2. What does Mike say that he might be sorry for later?

Discussion questions:

1. Explain this sentence of the story: "Cynthia just follows her stomach around."
2. Fairly early in the story, Mike says, "I wish she'd drop dead." What does Mike really mean?
3. Authors put in clues as they write stories. Read aloud the part early in this story that tells you what is going to happen to Cynthia.
4. How did Mike know where to look for Cynthia?
5. What did Mike have to do to get into the garage?
6. How did Mike show he had a cool head in an emergency?
7. In what ways did Mike change during the story?

SPRING, TRAINS, BEER

Vocabulary:

narrator
boxcar
missions
troubles
Sergeant
stroller
bicycling
promise
sliding
stack
vents
sacks
hollered
thirst

Reading activity:

Since this selection is in play form, this may be an opportunity to have your pupils give a dramatic reading. To arouse pupils' interest, you may want to have them print signs for the part each is reading. The signs may be pinned on clothing or hung about the neck.

Also, you may want the readers to stand in front of the class or sit in chairs or desks at the front of the room, facing the rest of the class. You might want either to change parts every few pages or to keep the same pupils for the entire reading. Pupils may want to prepare for their parts at least a day ahead of time.

Discussion questions:

During or after the reading of the play, you may want to discuss some of its content through questions such as the following:

1. Why have their fathers forbidden Rudy and Henry to be together?
2. Where do the boys happen to meet again after their fathers have forbidden them to see each other?
3. Why do the boys hop the freight train to Chicago?
4. What plan do the boys have for eating while on the trip to Chicago?
5. What happened once the boys climbed up into the boxcar?
6. How do the boys stay alive without food and water?
7. How were the boys finally saved?
8. This play is based on a true story. However, before you tell the pupils this, ask them, "Why do you think this story could not happen in real life?"

After they give their answers to the questions, tell them this story really happened. Ask them what they might have done if they were in Rudy's and Henry's place. This might be a most interesting discussion on problem solving, human relations, and the dangers encountered during youth.

9. Why do you think "Spring, Trains, Beer" is a good title for this play?

THE RACE

Vocabulary:

yelled	chest	fenders	skid
champs	toothpick	slide	grip
sidelines	pumped	spit	trash

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. From the little bit just read aloud, tell what kind of boy you think Joe is.
2. What does Joe want to do?

Discussion questions:

1. How did Fred get enough money to buy his bike?
2. Why didn't Joe keep his job at the drug store? What might this tell you about the kind of boy Joe is?
3. Why doesn't Joe win the qualifying races leading up to the last and most important race?
4. Why does Joe want to win the big race so much?
5. By what means does Joe try to make sure that Fred will not win?
6. What happens to Joe just before the end of the race?
7. How does Fred show that he is a good winner?
8. Why did Joe change his feeling about Fred at the end of the story?
9. What did Joe learn in the story?

I'LL TELL YOU WHY

Vocabulary:

cane
yelling
freeway
screen
offramp
Continental
pest
Bandaid

Motivational reading: the first five paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What are some of the things that have happened to the boy telling the story?
2. After hearing just the first few paragraphs of this story, how would you describe Jerry?
3. What is the story going to be about?

Discussion questions:

1. What does Jerry like to do best of all?
2. Why does our hero who is telling the story go out looking for Jerry?
3. What happens to our storyteller when he gets to the freeway?
4. How does Jerry "save" his brother?
5. What finally happens to Jerry?
6. What happens to our storyteller as the story ends?

MONSTERS AND MUMMIES AT MIDNIGHT

Vocabulary:

monsters
mummies
museum
skeletons
prehistoric
basement
showcase
shrink
coffin
sarcophagus
wobbled
dragon
mask
dinosaur
mammoth

Motivational reading: the first eleven paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. How do you know this is going to be a mystery story?
2. According to Bill, what is Ted's main fault?

Discussion questions:

1. Why are Ted and Bill in the museum?
2. Why does Ted get into the old coffin?
3. What mix-up happens that makes it possible for Ted to stay in the museum?
4. What is happening in the museum as Ted wakes up several hours later?
5. How did the thief manage to stay in the museum without being discovered?
6. What clever plan did the thief have for stealing the valuable necklace?
7. How does Ted spoil the thief's plan to steal the necklace?
8. Why do you think the thief wanted the necklace?
9. How does Ted's main fault become a help during the story?

UNHAUNTED HOUSE

Vocabulary:

haunted
ghosts
Halloween
graveyard
motto
edgy
scared
minuet
waltz
attic
pretend

Reading activity:

Since this selection is a play, you may want to have pupils give a dramatic reading. Signs could be used to identify the parts.

Discussion questions:

1. Why did the group go to the old house?
2. What are some of the things the ghost tells the group?
3. Who does the ghost turn out to be?
4. How does the group offer to help the ghost?
5. What is the meaning of the title of the play?
6. What was the author telling us through this play?

THE CAR THIEF

Vocabulary:

convertible
dashboard
blinker
screech
rumble
padded
dials
leather
thunk
automatic
carpet
siren
shrill
ambulance

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. How does Julius feel about the car he sees?
2. What is the story going to be about?

Discussion questions:

1. As the weeks pass, what kind of feeling does Julius grow to have for the car?
2. Why didn't Julius ask the woman for a ride in the car?
3. What preparations did Julius make before attempting to drive the red convertible?

4. In what way does Julius differ from other car thieves?

5. What happened to the red convertible?

6. What might have happened to Julius if he had driven the car?

CRAZY EDDIE

Vocabulary:

bombardment	fake	lapels	blur
dodge	kooky	tennies	

Motivational reading: the first seven paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. Who is telling the story? How old is he? What clues tell you his age?

2. What is going to be the conflict in the story?

Discussion questions:

1. Why does the teller of the story think bombardment is great?

2. What makes the game risky to play?

3. Why does Duke want to take over?

4. How do you feel about the fact that Duke boasts he is the best player and then proves it?

5. Why doesn't Eddie give up?

MYSTERY OF THE GOLDEN LOCKET

Vocabulary:

reputation interfere swallowed jewelry

bracelet
involved
brag
locket
sympathetic
combination
trembling
pretended
sparkle
property

Motivational reading: the first six paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. Why was Ellie upset at the opening of the story?
2. Why did Miss Harris call Ellie in first?

Discussion questions:

1. What was Ellie's plan for proving she was not a thief?
2. After the locket was stolen, how did Ellie and Miss Harris finally find the real thief?
3. Why did Vicki steal the jewelry?
4. Why did Ellie feel sorry for Vicki when Miss Harris was checking Vicki's locker?
5. What did Ellie mean by the following statements about Vicki? "She didn't really steal the things, not to keep. She was upset about James. She didn't know that a boy isn't like a locket. He's not property. He's a person."

LEGENDARY AMERICANS

John Henry, a Good Guy

Vocabulary:

railroads
steam drill
whistled
brawny
tunnel
contest
sweat
steel
hero
spirit

Motivational reading: the song and the first three paragraphs

Discussion questions:

1. According to the song, what is going to happen in the story?

2. Why is John Henry called the spirit of working America?

3. What kind of contest was set up for John Henry?

4. Who won the contest?

5. What happened to John Henry?

6. What does this legend tell us about the conflict between men and machines?

Billy the Kid, a Bad Guy

Vocabulary:

juvenile
victims
reputation
scolding
delinquent
ruthless
insulting
notches
weapon

Motivational reading: the song and the first paragraph

Discussion questions:

1. According to the song, what is the story going to be about?

2. What evidence is offered to show that Billy was a cold-blooded killer?

3. In what ways may the real cowboys of Billy the Kid's time differ from the cowboys we see in movies and on TV?

4. Why have we made cowboys into heroes?

Dorie Miller, a Hero

Vocabulary:

sharecropper disappointment presumed bridge
explosions

Motivational reading: the first four paragraphs

Discussion questions:

1. Why was Dorie not allowed to man a gun in the U. S. Navy before December 7, 1941?
2. How did Dorie show his bravery?
3. How did Dorie Miller die?
4. What does Dorie's story show about human beings?

Paul Bunyan, a Symbol

Vocabulary:

symbol brawling lumberjack fantastic
greased challenge appetite whirlpool
ox

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Discussion questions:

1. If Paul Bunyan is a symbol, what might he stand for?
2. What were some of the unbelievable things told about Paul and his friends?
3. Why are stories such as Paul Bunyan's enjoyable, even though they are unbelievable?
4. What other symbols have you seen used?
5. What would you do to turn a friend into a legendary hero?

(Comparative Questions)

1. In what way are Dorie Miller and Billy the Kid alike? How are they different?
2. Why was John Henry a good guy, and Billy the Kid a bad guy?
3. How does the word legendary fit each of four persons in the stories?
4. In what ways are John Henry and Paul Bunyan alike? How are they different?

ROBERT SMALLS AND THE AMAZING ESCAPE

Vocabulary:

wharves
shadows
cruelty
Confederates
meritorious
inspiration
stealthy
ammunition
pilot
laundry
moorings
berth
sentries
muzzles
truce
gallantry
bale
stocky

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. When did this story take place?
2. What is Robert Smalls planning to do?
3. Why did he want to escape?

Discussion questions:

1. Where did the story take place?
2. Why did Robert want to take the boat?
3. What happened once the boat got past Fort Sumter?
4. What happened to Robert after he successfully escaped in the boat?

5. Why was Robert Smalls respected by all people?

NIGHT ADVENTURE

Vocabulary:

sullen
reliable
cactus
funnel
shacks
cafe
paradise
cautioned
poetry
dudes
braced
cannon

Motivational reading: the first ten paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. Why is Mr. Cole angry with Tommy?
2. What kind of trip do the people seem to be on?
3. What kind of adventure do you think is about to take place?

Discussion questions:

1. Why might Tommy's attitude get him into trouble?
2. What trouble does Tommy get into?
3. How is Gary different from Tommy?
4. Why don't the boys call on Mr. Cole to help them? Do you think they made the right decision? Why, or why not?
5. In what ways was Tommy changed as a result of his experience?

THE DAY

Vocabulary:

destruction
radar
tornado
concrete
sparkles
overpass

Motivational reading: the first four paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. What clues tell you when and where the story takes place?

2. What must have happened to cause such destruction?

Discussion questions:

1. Why is the old man so interested in a bird's song at the beginning of the story?

2. What caused all of the destruction?

3. How were the old man and the boy saved?

4. What hope is given that life might not be lost forever?

LESSON PLANS FOR NOVELETTES

DANGER ABOVE AND BELOW

Vocabulary:

probation
custody
gripe
sass
stables
caper
scorn
kook
gulch
pride
arroyo
catch basin
frantically
confidence
fascinated
confusion
suicide
luxury
panicky
descent
shivered
anxious

Motivational reading: the first nine paragraphs, to the point where the judge recommends the boys for day camp

Appraisal questions:

1. Where does the story begin?

2. Why are the boys in trouble?

3. Why does the judge send the boys to day camp?

Discussion questions:

Since this is a long, episodic story in which action predominates, you may not want to hold an extended discussion on content. The following questions only touch upon some aspects of the story.

1. According to Mr. Hanson, what activities were the boys to have at the day camp?

2. How did the real activities differ from the ones planned by the director?

3. Why was the counselor wrong for letting the boys go into the drain pipe?

4. What does Willie learn from his adventure in the drain pipe?

5. How did Willie save James when the climbing rope broke on the bridge?

6. The brothers have to win their way into the group. What are some problems they have to solve before they are sucessful? In what ways does each of us have to face similar problems daily?

7. How does this story show that people will invent danger, even where there is none?

8. Because of the summer activities, what changes took place in the boys?

RUNAWAY JERK

Vocabulary:

jerk
grunted
spurted
foster
sneaked
pawn
counselor
genius
dough
hoods

Motivational reading: the first fifteen paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. Why does Mike get angry over a small happening like the taking of his pencil?

2. Why did Mike slam the ball hard against the wooden backstop?

3. What three happenings make Mike ready for a fight?

Discussion questions:

1. Why wouldn't Mike let the vice-principal help him?

2. Why did Mike run away from his foster home?

3. In what ways were Mike and the little boy alike?

4. What important thing about himself did Mike learn from the second movie he saw on that first day that he was away from home?

5. What did Mike remember about his father?

6. How did Mike get away from the hoods who tried to rob him?

7. What did the hoods do to Mike the second time they cornered him?

8. Why were the vice-principal and the foster mother worried that Mike had jumped into the lake?

9. Why did Mike feel good at the end of the story?

TRAMP DOG

Vocabulary:

lonely
rabies
ugly
magic
excitement

fertilizer
slitted
license
invisible
cringed

nervous
squirmed
sprouted
pound
shooed

application
agriculture
quarantine
employment
miserable

Motivational reading: the first three paragraphs

Appraisal questions:

1. Why didn't Benny have friends?

2. How did Benny feel about himself?

3. How did people treat Benny?

Discussion questions:

1. What was Benny's major problem?

2. Why did Benny think of the dog as a friend?

3. Why did Benny call the dog Ojos Tristes?

4. In what ways was the father right for not letting Benny keep the dog at first?

5. What were some of the problems Benny had in trying to get a job?

6. Why did the officer have to take the dog to the pound?

7. Why didn't Benny use the money he made at first to get the dog back from the pound?

8. In what ways was Benny wrong for not going to school for two days?

9. What is the most important thing that Benny learned from what happened to him in the story?